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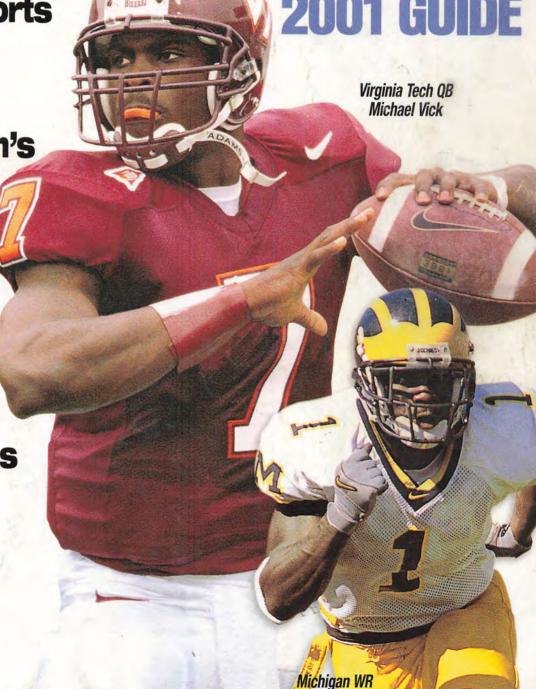
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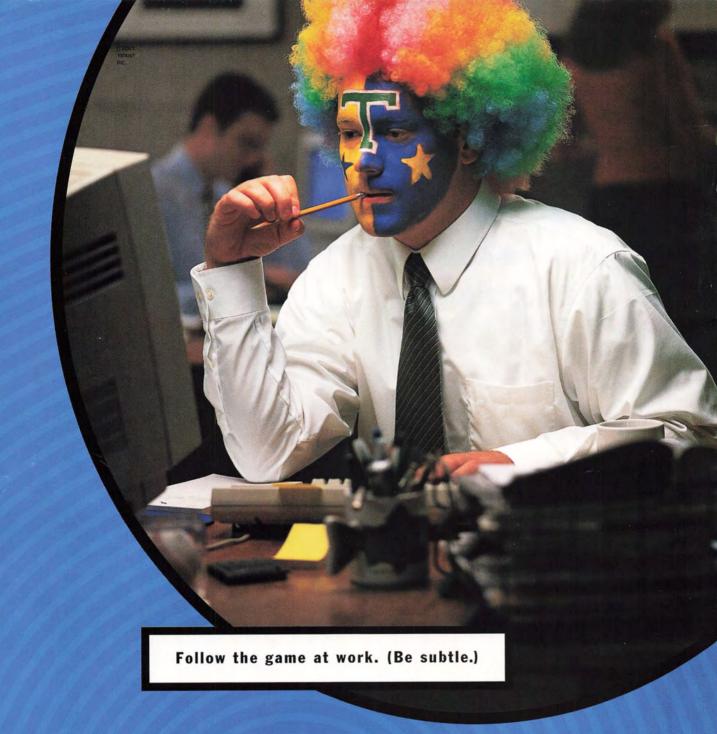
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Letter from the Senior Managing Editor

All draft, all the time

For dead baseball players, dreams come true in an Iowa cornfield. For NFL draftniks, you don't have to be dead or in Iowa. Heaven, for you, is just a click away: www.sportingnews.com/nfl/draft. It's the home of TSN's NFL Draft Central. Your field of dreams.

Admit it, if you have any complaints with this *Draft Guide*, it's that it's published only annually. The information is great, but the fact is, some things do change after we go to press in late February. Player stocks rise and fall from one individual workout to the next. NFL free agents change teams, affecting team needs and our mock draft. Picks are traded. For those of us who thrive on knowing the latest information, we need more. We need Draft Central.

Draft Central is stunning, It's loaded with even more of the player rankings and analyses that make this *Draft Guide* so incredible. As we go to press, we



have no less than 350 players in our Draft Central database—that's about 75 more than you'll find in this magazine—and we'll keep adding prospects as they reveal themselves. In addition to the wonderful analysis from The War Room, we have the perspective of TSN senior writer Dan Pompei, our NFL Insider columnist.

There's more. We have the Draft Dish, which offers the latest news and gossip on the draft front. We

have expert mailbags to answer your questions. We have updated rankings that reflect what scouts are seeing and saying in the weeks preceding the draft. We have updated mock drafts. In fact, after the compensatory picks are announced, we'll have a seven-round mock draft. We'll be collecting all kinds of stats for you—19 of them, to be precise, including the usual stuff (height, weight, 40 time, bench reps) as well as the more esoteric numbers (vertical jump, three-cone drill, even Wonderlic score). Not only that, you'll be able to sort each stat by position. In other words, if you want to know how the defensive tackles stack up by 60-yard shuttle times, you can do it. And, like everything else we're doing, we'll update these numbers as new information becomes available—often daily.

It gets even better draft weekend. Right now, you can see the top five players ranked at each position. Come April 21, when the draft begins, Draft Central will update constantly after each pick and show, at any moment, the top five players left on the board at every position. These updates will continue through the final pick late Sunday afternoon. Meanwhile, the team pages will be updated with analysis of the players taken by each club. Of course, we'll have real-time analysis of picks and trades by our experts.

Leading our team of experts is The War Room, which has been instrumental in all three editions of the *Draft Guide*. Headed by Gary Horton, a former NFL scout and college coach, The War Room analyzes NFL and college players and teams. In short, Gary and his staff—draft team leader Todd McShay, Jim Nagy, Peter Sousa and Joe Nangle—spend their days and nights watching game film and talking to NFL scouts and coaches. For this book, they start assembling prospect lists before the season begins and then watch at least one game film of every prospect they evaluate. In many cases, they watch multiple films. By the time the Super Bowl is over, they know these prospects like they know their roommates. That's why they can write the insightful analysis you find throughout this magazine. In fact, they wrote all but 12 pages of the *Draft Guide*.

The War Room also writes the bulk of what you'll find in Draft Central. If you haven't visited Draft Central yet, trust me, you'll love it. It's where to go for NFL draft information 365 days a year. Because that's the number of days a year that The Sporting News and The War Room think about the draft.

You can write Mike Nahrstedt at mnahrstedt@sportingnews.com or at 10176 Corporate Square Dr., Suite 200, St. Louis, MO 63132.

Mike Vahralite

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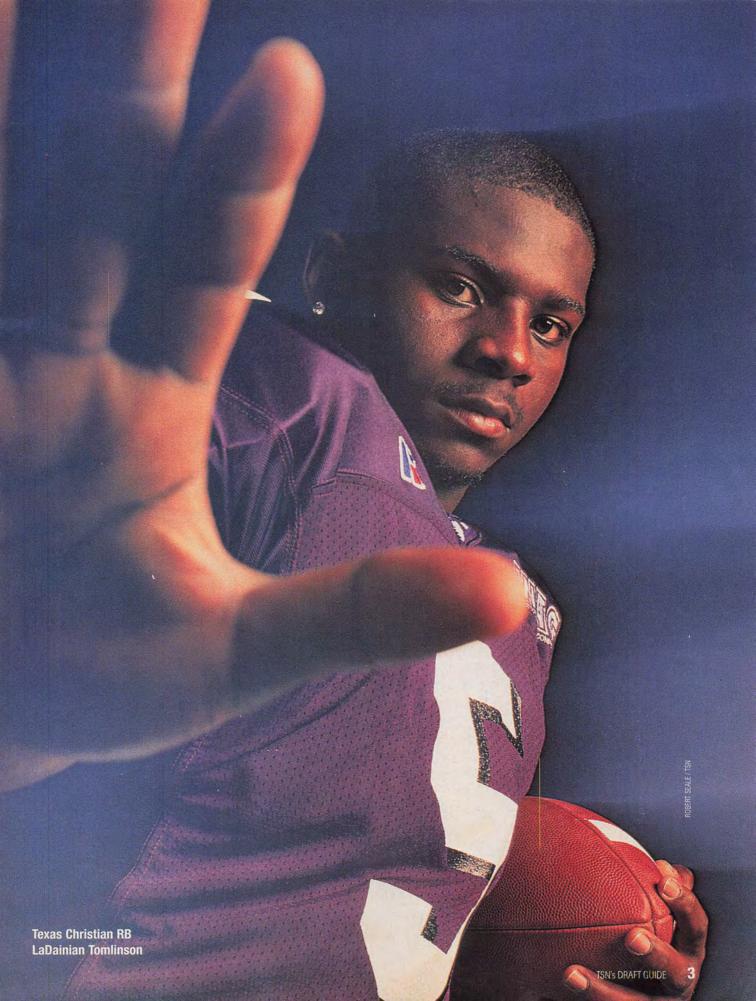
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Scouting the draft The War Room breaks down Michael Vick's game, looks at why so many Florida State defensive players succeed in the NFL and analyzes many other hot pre-draft issues A painful past 10 Deuce McAllister has been compared with Marshall Faulk and should be the first running back chosen. But his history of injuries puts a cloud of doubt over him. **Cool Brees** 14 Critics of Drew Brees (he's too short, his arm isn't strong enough, he's the product of a quarterback-friendly system at Purdue) have overlooked one thing: He's a winner **Combing the Combine** 18 The War Room tells you which players helped themselves-and which didn't-in Indianapolis 22 How we see it The War Room projects how the first round of the 2001 draft will unfold Stacking the board 24 Here's how the players rank-position by position and round by round **General information** 127 **Player index** 128

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Breaking down extraordinary

QB prospect Michael Vick,
the incredible shrinking defensive ends
and many other hot pre-draft topics

BY THE WAR ROOM

here is no doubt Virginia Tech's Michael Vick is the star of the 2001 draft class. In fact, he could be the most highly touted quarterback prospect ever. But he's not ready to shine just yet.

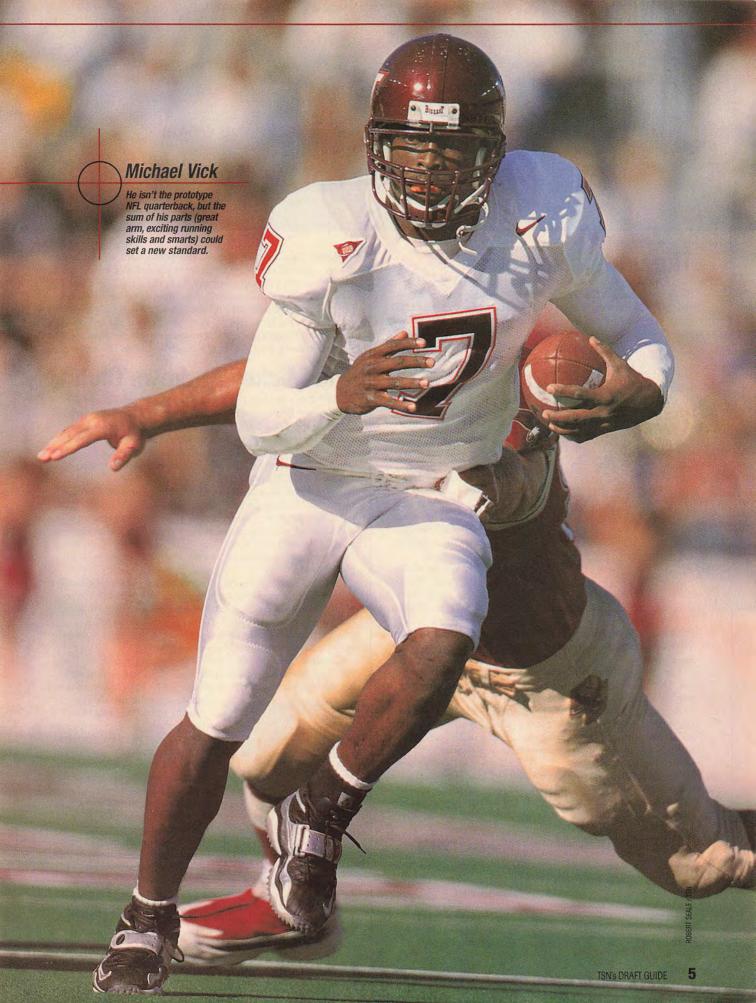
Sure, Vick has Dan Marino's arm and Marshall Faulk's running ability. He's smart. Professors, coaches and peers describe him as a great person who works hard at his craft and takes care of business on and off the field. And for all we know, he has never even set foot in a Dillard's.

But NFL scouts and coaches are a cynical group. Their evaluations go far beyond a player's personality and physical skills.

Before investing millions of dollars in Vick—or even trading established players with additional picks to then

invest millions of dollars in him—prospective employers must take these factors into consideration:

- Size. At 6-0, Vick is a few inches shorter than the prototype NFL quarterback. He is well-built, almost like a running back, and his arms are unusually big for a quarterback. And he isn't Doug Flutie-short. But the scouts would love it if he were even somewhere between 6-2 and 6-3, as is Philadelphia's Donovan McNabb. The biggest concern with shorter quarterbacks is that their passing windows become cluttered and they don't see the field well. If Vick is to succeed as a passer, he must get outside the pocket, where he can see the entire field.
- Offensive fit. Like Flutie and McNabb, Vick is tough to plug into a system. Few systems are established with the premise that the quarterback's third option is to take off and run. Many veteran NFL coordinators swear by their X's and O's. McNabb has been fortunate because Eagles coach Andy Reid adjusted his system to allow McNabb to be the playmaker. Flutie has been less fortunate, playing for coaches who have been squeamish about letting him turn an NFL stadium into a sandlot. Vick needs a system that conforms to his many strengths, particularly his mobility. That said, any team considering drafting Vick must settle on an offensive system and stick with it. Vick just doesn't have enough experience to bounce from one system to another and be effective.



SCOUTING the draft

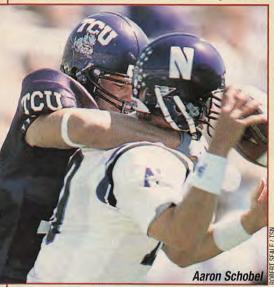
Experience and durability. Vick played only two seasons at Virginia Tech and started only 21 of 24 games. He missed time in both of his seasons, prompting concerns about his durability, but there are more questions about his knowledge of the passing game. The Hokies' system made his first two reads simple, and his third option was to run. It was a pretty easy offense to master. In the NFL, he could get by as a rookie on raw athleticism, but it won't help him down the road. He

needs a year on the sideline with his coach, learning the playbook and taking everything in. If forced into action right away, Vick's growth will be stunted.

It will be tempting for any team that drafts Vick to get him on the field quickly. But if he is nurtured within a system—one that is stable and accentuates his talents—Vick not only will pay dividends, but also could become the future standard by which everyone measures greatness at the quarterback position. He's that talented.

The undersized ends

The mold for a defensive end is changing, but it might not be for the better. "It used to be where we would hunt guys down at the college level who were around 270 pounds, could run under a 5.0 in the 40-yard dash and would blow up the run," says an NFC West



scout. "And really ever since L.T. (Lawrence
Taylor), it seems like these guys are getting smaller and faster, where they're now starting to resemble outside linebackers."

The 2001 class is littered with undersized ends: Florida State's Roland Seymour, Florida State's David Warren; Cal's Andre Carter; Oregon State's

DeLawrence Grant; Minnesota's Karon Riley; and Nebraska's Kyle Vanden Bosch. Eight of our top 12 ends are 260 pounds or less but full of speed.

The problem is these explosive rush ends are liabilities against the run. That places a premium on ends who have the size and ability to stop the run as well as rush the passer.

Reynolds (254 pounds) is the perfect example. He clearly is the best athlete at the end position. He is explosive, quick off the ball and a natural playmaker as a pass rusher. However, he probably won't be the top end drafted because he is considered a target against the run.

The likely No. 1 end? Missouri's Justin Smith, who gives up a fraction of a second in the 40-yard dash and some athleticism to Reynolds but weighs 23 more pounds and is better against the run. And in the NFL these days, that makes Smith a rare commodity.

This year's sleeper corner

A year ago, it was Jackson State's Rashard Anderson, West Texas A&M's Kareem Larrimore and Louisiana-Monroe's Patrick Dennis. The year before, it was Weber State's Anthony Parker and Northwestern (La.) State's Kenny Wright. Every year, an obscure player from some small school emerges as a top-flight cornerback prospect.

The corner to keep an eye on this year is Ligarius Jennings of

Tennessee State. Jennings (5-10½, 195) runs a 4.49 40 and is considered a fourth- or fifth-round prospect, but he has the tools to emerge as one of the top cover corners in this class. There was a time when NFL teams would shy away from these smaller-school players because it takes time for them to adjust to a higher level of play. But the recent success stories of players such as Larrimore, Dennis and Wright have paved the way for a guy like Jennings. The raw skill is there; it's up to his new coaching staff to develop it.

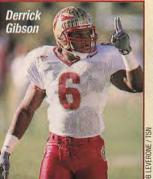
The Mickey Andrews Club

The Mickey Mouse Club, a fertile field for aspiring young performers (see: Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Justin Timberlake), makes its home in Disney World. Less than 100 miles north of Orlando, the state of Florida has another Mickey with a knack for developing young talent. The site is Tallahassee, the talent is defensive football players and the mentor is Florida State defensive coordinator Mickey Andrews.

Two national titles and 175 wins in 17 seasons is an impressive résumé, but perhaps the best way to judge Andrews' success is by more than two dozen players named as All-Americans in some form and a host of other players he has sent to the NFL. Deion Sanders, Terrell Buckley, LeRoy Butler, Derrick Brooks, Andre Wadsworth, Peter Boulware, Sam Cowart, Marvin Jones and Corey Simon all played for Andrews.

Andrews would be the first to admit he gets some of the best athletes in the country, which certainly makes his job easier, but he knows how to get the most out of them. He is tough and demanding, but perhaps most important, he doesn't force them to adapt to a trademark system. Andrews does a better job than most in terms of allowing his players to showcase their talents.

Consider safety Derrick Gibson, a first-round prospect this year. He is a great athlete with exceptional size for a defensive back. He has the range to cover a lot of ground, but he also plays the run like



a linebacker. Andrews allowed Gibson to take on the role of a "rover," which gave Gibson the platform to display all of his strengths, rather than limiting him to the confines of the ordinary free or strong safety position. It is this type of attention to his players' strengths that has helped turn his defense into a minor league for the NFL.

This year, more than any, Andrews' impact on the NFL will be evident. There is a serious possibility that seven of the first 96 players drafted will be members of the Florida State defense of last season.

Gibson, Seymour, Warren, Reynolds, linebackers Brian Allen and Tommy Polley and cornerback Tay Cody make up what we believe will be the greatest compilation of athletes to enter the draft from one college football unit.



A new high for the Wolverines

Ever since the days when Bo Schembechler brought a yardstick to practice to whip the back of his offensive linemen's calves when they were in their stances just to emphasize discipline, the Wolverines' program has been a virtual springboard to the NFL for offensive linemen. Among the Michigan greats in the league now are Eagles tackle Jon Runyan, free-agent center Steve Everitt, Jets tackle Jumbo Elliott and Redskins tackle Jon Jansen.

This draft could lift Michigan's offensive-line legacy to a new high. Never have four offensive linemen been drafted from the same team, but tackles Jeff Backus and Maurice Williams, guard Steve Hutchinson and center David Brandt likely will make history this April. Backus, Williams and Hutchinson are possible first-round picks, and Brandt should go sometime on day two.



Stealing from their elders

Teams in need of wide receivers had to be pleased when underclassmen David Terrell of Michigan, Koren Robinson of North Carolina State and Freddie Mitchell of UCLA declared for this year's draft, making the receiver class a strong one. But for the top senior receivers, including Miami's Santana Moss, Clemson's Rod

Gardner, Oregon State's Chad Johnson, Ohio State's Ken-Yon Rambo and Kansas State's Quincy Morgan, it was a costly turn of events.

Heading into the January 12 deadline for underclassmen to declare for the draft, Moss was our top-rated receiver. Our mock draft at the time had him being drafted by Seattle with the seventh pick overall. The following week, after Terrell and Robinson announced they would turn pro, we dropped Moss to Washington with the 15th pick. If that scenario actually transpires, how much could this cost Moss? Well, last year's seventh pick, running back Thomas Jones, received a \$5.7 million signing bonus from Arizona. Meanwhile, the 15th pick, cornerback Deltha O'Neal, got a \$4.5 million signing bonus from Denver.

Why, again, did you leave school early?

Thirty-six underclassmen made themselves eligible for the 2001 draft. While most had great reasons (read: lots of money) for their decisions, you have to wonder about a few of them. To wit:

■ Clemson dismissed defensive back Alex Ardley from the team January 4 after an altercation with coach Tommy Bowden during the Gator Bowl. The incident took place after Ardley was ejected from

the game late in the fourth quarter for such transgressions as hits after the whistle and yelling at players and the referees during the 41-20 loss to Virginia Tech. It wasn't the first time Ardley had exchanged words with a member of the Clemson coaching staff. Though he is talented—he is the only Clemson defensive back to start every game his freshman and sophomore years—he carries the red flag of significant disciplinary baggage.

■ Florida wide receiver John Capel competed in the 200-meter finals at the Sydney Olympics and is a proven track star, but his college résumé is skimpy. He caught 11 passes for 88 yards and no touchdowns, returned 19 kickoffs for 415 yards and returned 10 punts for 74 yards. In his Gators *career*.

Georgia quarterback Quincy Carter was a better prospect as a sophomore than he was last year as a junior. He got progressively worse over the course of last season, which made it increasingly difficult to understand his decision to leave school early. The firing of coach Jim Donnan did, however, force Carter's hand. Instead of going back for his senior year under a new coaching staff and offensive system, Carter opted to test his luck in April's draft-a decision that could cost him millions.

■ LSU quarterback Josh Booty apparently decided it would be easier to find work in the NFL than win back a starting job at LSU after a dismal performance in the Peach Bowl. Booty was replaced in the second half of that game by Rohan Davey, who led the Tigers to victory. It seemed clear it would be Davey's job to lose in the spring and so Booty, 25, who played five seasons in the Marlins' organization, split. Booty seems to be moving up draft boards after a solid combine, but that's mostly based on his strong arm and size, not productivity on the field.





SCOUTING the draft



Ja'Mar Toombs

This Aggie and other big, powerful runners are considered limited talents by NFL teams hunting for versatility.

The one-two punch at running back

The recent success of running backs Marshall Faulk of St. Louis, Edgerrin James of Indianapolis and even Eddie George of Tennessee is spoiling the hopes of some very talented prospects. The problem is, these prospects are not do-everything backs, and it will work against them.

The goal now for an NFL scout is to find a player who can stay on the field for all three downs, rather than giving way to a third-down specialist. The value in having one all-purpose back such as Faulk, who can run up the middle, run wide, take a dump-off from the quarterback or even line up split wide and beat some cornerbacks, is that it saves a roster spot or two and allows the running back to become more involved in the game plan, which keeps him in a rhythm.

Teams such as the Giants (Tiki Barber and Ron Dayne), the Raiders (Napoleon Kaufman and Tyrone Wheatley) and the Bucs (Warrick Dunn and Mike Alstott) succeed with a one-two punch, but the situation is not ideal. And so some of the biggest, most powerful backs in this year's draft, including Texas A&M's Ja'Mar Toombs, Auburn's Rudi Johnson and Nebraska's Dan Alexander, are viewed as limited talents because they can contribute only on first and second down.

"These three players are a good example of how speed has changed the game," says a scout for an AFC Central team. "Just a few years ago, we would have rated them higher on our boards, but the league has been spoiled with some versatile backs, and now everyone is looking for the home run hitter. Sometimes it seems like we sacrifice talent for potential."

A guard is a guard is a guard

Tackles first, then center. At the bottom of the offensive line totem pole are the guards. "If you have two dominant tackles and a smart, mobile center," says a personnel director from an AFC team, "you can get away with a couple of average talents at the two guard positions."

The situation is not unlike the secondary, where you take a cornerback who has trouble covering in man-to-man situations and move him to a less-vulnerable safety spot. Similarly, teams are consistently taking tackles who are not quick enough to play alone on

the edge against speed pass rushers and moving them inside, where they have protection on both sides.

Ironically, as the league's view of the guard position is diminishing, this year's guard class could be the best we have seen in the past decade. Michigan's Steve Hutchinson, Washington's Chad Ward, Kentucky's Omar Smith, Mississippi State's Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack and Boston College's Paul Zukauskas headline this year's unusually talented guard position. All five players are talented enough to warrant a pick in the first three rounds. The question is whether teams will elect to draft a less-talented player with the potential to play tackle rather than drafting a more gifted guard.



SENIOR BOWN

Keep your eyes on these two QBs

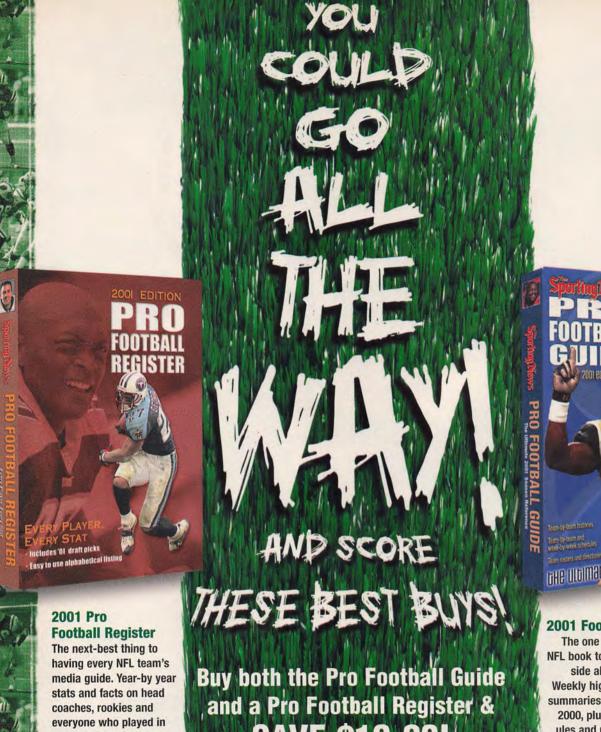
The league's shift from pure pocket passers to more mobile, playmaking quarterbacks has made it possible for players such as Tampa Bay's Shaun King, New Orleans' Aaron Brooks and even Detroit's Charlie Batch to have early and unexpected success. The 2001 draft offers a couple of players who, like the aforementioned trio, are not firstround material but who

could enjoy similar success. They are Boise State's Bart Hendricks and Western Carolina's David Rivers.

Hendricks is more of a scrambler. He feels the pocket collapsing and does a remarkable job of creating second chances as a passer. He doesn't have a rifle for an arm, but he's a playmaker with impressive overall accuracy. He evokes images of Flutie by using his legs to get out of the pocket and create big plays. If placed in a system that allows him to improvise, Hendricks could have a successful NFL career.

Rivers, on the other hand, is less athletic and not as fast as Hendricks, but he has the innate ability to avoid the rush by stepping up or stepping out of the collapsing pocket. He, too, has great accuracy as a passer and could develop into a very consistent starting quarterback if put in the right offense.

The War Room, headed by former NFL scout Gary Horton, analyzes NFL personnel and college prospects.



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Deuce McAllister has the size, speed, hands and intangibles to be a Faulk-like back in the NFL, but his durability concerns scouts By Dennis Dillon

euce McAllister, his 6-1, 220-pound frame filling a high-backed office chair in the running backs' meeting room at the University of Mississippi, swivels 90 degrees to his right so he can see the red, poster-size football schedule hanging on the back wall. As his eyes survey the names of the opponents, images of the 2000 season appear in his head. Painful images. Frustrating images. Sorrowful images.

September 16, at Vanderbilt: On the final play of the third quarter, a Vanderbilt player tackles McAllister as he goes out of bounds. He lands on his right shoulder, suffering a sprain of the A/C joint, which connects the shoulder blade to the collarbone.

October 14, at Alabama: On the second series of the game, McAllister is picking up a blitz when an Alabama player comes from behind and rolls into the back of his left leg. He suffers a high ankle sprain.

November 4, at Arkansas: On a cold day in Fayetteville, McAllister breaks a 57-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter but pulls up limping before he gets into the end zone. Hamstring injury.

McAllister couldn't even survive the holidays

unscathed. When he showed up in Nashville on Christmas Eve, four days before Ole Miss played West Virginia in the Music City Bowl, he had a boil on his nose. Tim Mullins, the Rebels' athletic trainer, took one look at McAllister and said, "Hey, Rudolph, where's Comet and Cupid?"

In addition to the injuries, McAllister had to deal with a personal tragedy. On November 11, his family, including his older brother, Demetrious, watched from the stands in Oxford as Ole Miss lost to LSU. That night Demetrious, who had scoliosis and suffered with breathing problems, died in his sleep at the family's home in Ludlow, Miss.

It wasn't supposed to be like that. McAllister came into the season poised to rush for 1,000 yards, tear up the Southeastern Conference and become Ole Miss' first Heisman Trophy finalist since Archie Manning finished third in 1970 and fourth in 1969.

Deuce was on the loose.

Instead, his season became the script for a horror flick. He missed nine full quarters because of injuries, his playing time was reduced in several other games and he lost a sibling. How did he cope with all the adversity?

euce McAllister

"Everything happens for a reason," McAllister says, "Definitely, you look at the faith part of it. I just put it in the Lord's hands. He's not going to put too much on you that you can't bear.

"I look at the bright side. I was able to get my degree; that's a big plus. I think I matured more as a person and as a football player. Now I understand a little more than I did last year what it's like to come back and maybe not succeed at the highest level but still suc-

ceed. And I still have the opportunity to go through the draft."

Exactly where McAllister will fall in the NFL draft (April 21-22) is a subject of debate. He came into the 2000 season ranked No. 1 on the National Scouting Combine's player evaluation list. Not just first among running backs but No. 1 overall. But in National's postseason report, released in early December, three players-Miami (Fla.) wide receiver Santana Moss, Texas offensive tackle Leonard Davis and Texas defensive tackle Shaun Rogers-had higher grades. There even was talk that Maryland's LaMont Jordan had leaped over McAllister on some teams' lists of running backs.

But in an era when NFL teams are looking for multipurpose backs such as the Rams' Marshall Faulk and the Colts' Edgerrin James, McAllister would appear to fit the mold. He's an every-down player who can run, catch and return kicks. You can line him up at tailback in a conventional I-formation or as a receiver in the slot or split out wide.

"He's got great speed to get around the corner and accelerate to the next level," says John Dorsey, director of college scouting for the Packers. "And he's got the size to run inside. Plus, he catches the ball really well, and he's a threat as a return guv.

"If I'm an offensive coordinator and I'm scheming this guy, I can use

him in many different ways. I can flank him out in the slot and match him up one-on-one against a linebacker or a safety. He should easily win that battle."

Like Faulk, McAllister demonstrates a savvy comprehension for schemes and assignments-not only his own, but all of the offensive players'.

"In my 19 years of college coaching, he's the most intelligent football player I have ever been around," says Richard Bisaccia, Mississippi's running backs coach. "He can make every call that the quarterback makes for all the fronts. He understands coverages. He did not have a missed assignment in a game in the two years we've been together."

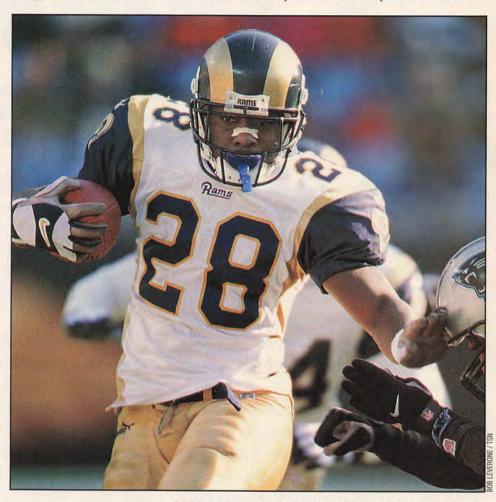
But McAllister was not exactly a workhorse running back at Mississippi. He and Joe Gunn, a junior last season, virtually shared the load the last two years. McAllister rushed 310 times for 1,576 yards; Gunn carried 307 times for 1,333 yards. The Ole Miss coaches felt it was best for the offense to use both backs.

The biggest concern is McAllister's durability. In addition to his various injuries last season, his playing time was limited in the first four games in 1999 because of an injury to his left shoulder.

"It always seems to be something," says Phil Savage, the Ravens'

director of college scouting. "Nothing major, just a lot of little things. It's a concern; there's no question about it."

Whichever NFL team takes McAllister will base its selection more on potential than production. Although he set six Ole Miss career records as a senior and led the SEC in scoring with 102 points (14 rushing touchdowns, two receiving touchdowns and one punt return for a TD), he rushed only 159 times for 767 yards. His season had



STUDENTS OF THE GAME: Much like Faulk (above), McAllister has taken it upon himself to understand the assignments of his offensive teammates.

more starts and stops than a lawn mower with a faulty spark plug.

"Auburn was probably my best game of the year, and the Mississippi State game also was good," McAllister says, looking at the second and last regular-season games. "So much happened in between. You're really looking at four games of maybe being healthy, and four out of 12 is not a good ratio. So you can see why there would be so many questions.'

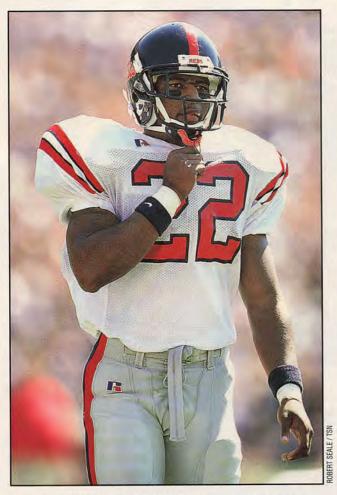
McAllister had planned to answer some of those questions during the week leading to the Senior Bowl January 20 in Mobile, Ala., where there was a captive audience of NFL coaches and scouts. After talking to Green Bay general manager Ron Wolf on January 9, McAllister decided he would play in the game. His team, the South, would be coached by the Packers' staff.

Three days later, McAllister changed his mind. After going to Birmingham, Ala., where sports orthopedist Dr. James Andrews examined him, McAllister pulled out of the Senior Bowl.

"Based on some of the things he told me about my shoulder, I thought it would be in my best interests not to play," says McAllister, who had reinjured his shoulder in the Music City Bowl and still was

experiencing inflammation and pain two weeks later.

After the original injury in September, Mullins designed a molded, plastic pad with a bubble that he taped to McAllister's shoulder, under his pads. It prevented him from absorbing a direct blow. McAllister wore it for the rest of the regular season, which ended on Thanksgiving Day.



PROJECTION SELECTION: Because of McAllister's injury history, the NFL team that takes him will base its choice on potential rather than production.

Here's how concerned Ole Miss staff members were about McAllister's shoulder. Two weeks after the injury, they didn't let him take the traditional walk through The Grove before the Kentucky game. Before every home game, the Ole Miss coaches and players walk single file from the student union through The Grove, a 10-acre grassy plot of ground filled with oak trees and tailgaters. Fans line the walkway on both sides and are so close to the players that they can touch them. The coaches were afraid someone would inadvertently slap McAllister on his injured shoulder. So while his teammates walked to the stadium, McAllister rode in a police cruiser.

By the Music City Bowl, McAllister thought sufficient time had elapsed for the shoulder to heal, so he didn't wear the protective pad in that game, a decision he would later regret.

"Do I want to continue to have pain, or do I want to go ahead and rehabilitate it and get it stronger, so I don't have it further into my career?" McAllister says, explaining his decision to bypass the Senior Bowl. "I wasn't going to carry the ball 25 times in the game. Whether I played or not, they're still going to ask the same questions about my durability."

is given first name is Dulymus (pronounced Duymus), but it is hard to say. When McAllister wore jersey No. 2 in high school, one of his coaches started calling him Deuce.

On this same day in January, McAllister walked into Mullins' office in the training room and grabbed Mullins' 6-month-old son, Hayden, lifting him high into the air. As he held the toddler, McAllister let Hayden reach for the bill of his baseball cap. When Mullins and his wife adopted Hayden last July, McAllister was the first player to call and congratulate them.

Last May, McAllister spent three weeks in Costa Rica, where he earned six hours of Spanish toward his degree in criminology. He lived with a host family named Jimenez. McAllister attended classes from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day, then came home and played with Maria, the Jimenez's 3-year-old daughter, before dinner. McAllister was trying to learn to speak Spanish, and Maria was learning English. They helped each other.

He stayed in shape by working out at a local spa. Jogging in the streets was too dangerous. "They're not safe drivers down there," he says. "All you hear is the tooting of the horns. You don't know if someone is angry or saying hello."

Off the field, McAllister does not flaunt his status as a high-profile football player. He tries to avoid recognition rather than seek it out. After his brother died, McAllister returned to school for a couple of days before the funeral, which was on a Thursday. That Wednesday, when a story ran in the school newspaper about his brother's death, McAllister did not go to class because he wanted to avoid talking about it with other students.

When he goes out to a fast-food restaurant, he often wears a baseball cap to help maintain a low profile. If he goes to an Ole Miss basketball game, he may sit up high in a corner, away from the crowd, or down low, where he can blend in.

"I just want to go and watch the game and get out of there," he says. "Off the field, I'm just a normal guy. When I go out, I want to be just like you; you're out there having fun. Football is something I happen to play, but I don't think it defines me as a person."

Quiet. Unassuming. Yes, sir. No, sir. A guy who loves people, especially kids. That's what defines McAllister off the football field.

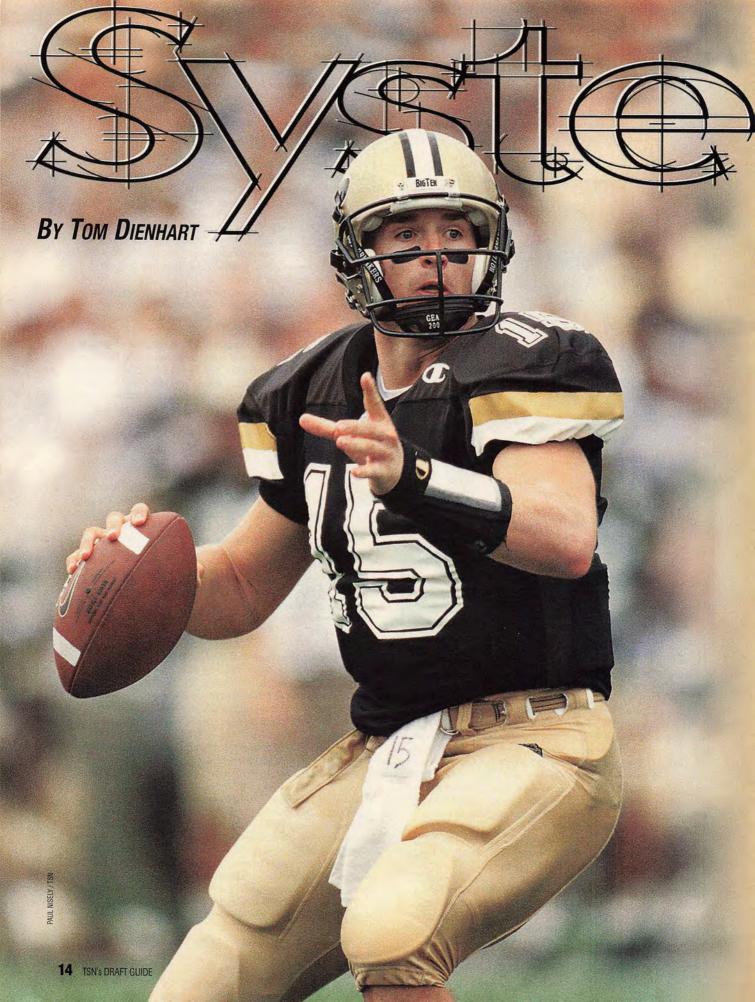
"No matter what you do or where you're from-whether you're a custodian or the chancellor of the university-he has the ability to carry on a conversation about all kinds of things," says Bisaccia, the running backs coach. "He has an innate ability to make you fall in love with him."

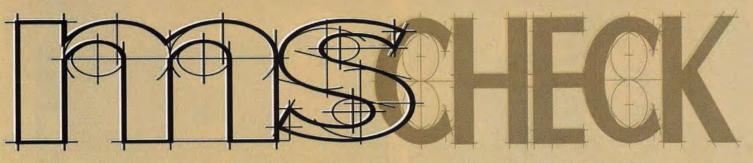
espite McAllister's charms, no NFL team will rashly declare unconditional love for him. The draft is a high-risk venture that often results in low returns. You can find a solid running back in the second and third rounds-or lower, as the Broncos have proved. McAllister is a sure first-rounder, possibly even a top 10 pick, but his stock will depend on how he answers the questions about his durability.

In preparation for the draft, McAllister continued rehabilitating and strengthening his shoulder-first at Ole Miss and then at an indoor football facility in Pittsburgh that is affiliated with the sports management division of SFX Entertainment, the company he chose to represent him. He did not plan to run the 40-yard dash or participate in any other drills at the scouting combine in February in Indianapolis, but you can bet that he was poked and prodded extensively during the medical exams. In March, he scheduled three personal workouts for NFL scouts at Ole Miss. "When he has his own private workout, I want to make sure he's healthy, No. 1," says one NFL scout. "I think I know what kind of runner he is. What I want to see him do is run routes and stuff like that."

Then, on April 21, McAllister will be the top card in one team's draft hand. It will draw the Deuce-and hope he's wild.

Senior writer Dennis Dillon covers the NFL for THE SPORTING NEWS.





Drew Brees has intelligence, mobility and a winning mentality, but is that enough to overcome his lack of height and a powerful arm? It all may depend on the scheme of his new team.

rew Brees has heard the whispers. He's too short. His arm isn't strong enough. He's a product of a quarterback-friendly system. Blah, blah, blah. It seems no potential first-round prospect is being more closely scrutinized

And with good reason. Unless players pass the eyeball test, they are

going to be held closer to the light for detection of potential flaws. Indeed, if Brees were a book, his cover would have all the appeal of an engineering manual. So, to find out whether Brees can be a successful pro, you must take time to dig below the surface and get past a build that makes Brees appear better suited to playing in a Saturday afternoon flag football league than on Sundays with the play-for-pay gang.

That's what THE SPORTING NEWS has done in an effort to discover whether Brees can be a legitimate

NFL quarterback.

COOL BREES: As the triggerman for Purdue's sophisticated offense. Brees (with sister Audrey) had plenty to celebrate.

The Systematic Approach

For Brees to succeed, it's important that he go to a team that uses a system that will fit his style. Brees would thrive best in a quick-release, West Coast type of attack, which is what clubs such as Seattle and Chicago use. "If he goes to a system that fits his abilities, then I think he could have a great pro career," says Ravens director of college scouting Phil Savage. "If he doesn't, I think it will take some time before he is given an opportunity to show what he can do. He's very smart, a class guy off the field."

Because he lacks the great physical skills of a Peyton Manning, Brees isn't the type of player to build a team around. Instead, he's a player whose success will be tied to the level of talent around him. After that, a coach can count on Brees doing his part: reading defenses, delivering passes on time, calling audibles. In short, he'll play smart and will get the ball into the hands of playmakers.

"He makes big throws, he converts third downs, he knows where the first-down markers are, he's a very aware and smart quarterback," says Bears director of college scouting Bill Rees.

Sure, the Purdue offense lends itself to building big passing numbers. And it can allow an average quarterback to build a dossier filled with figures that would impress anyone who loves to crunch stats. But the offense also allows a quarterback to develop skills. The spread puts a big burden on the quarterback, who must make multiple reads and assignment changes on almost every play. Brees didn't drop back, make one read and take off running if his primary target wasn't open.

"There are always going to be detractors of (Purdue's type of) offense, but you have to have a smart, skilled quarterback in charge of the offense, or it's simply not going to work," says Seahawks quarterback Jon Kitna, who played in a similar offense at Central Washington under coordinator Greg Olson, Brees' position coach at Purdue until leaving to be the 49ers' quarterbacks coach. Kitna and Brees worked out together during a Purdue camp for high school players in 1999. "Drew is smart, puts the ball on the money and has great feet. You

can't just plug any old Joe back there and say he's a product of the system.

'The offense helped me learn how to do things fast and read defenses quickly, and that's something you have to have to play in the NFL. It's a demanding offense. A lot is on the quarterback's shoulders. You have to be able to accept the fact that you could be the reason your team loses a game. But you also get the glory of leading your team back with one minute left in a bowl game."

Though Brees' numbers are impressive, his greatest feat at Purdue was his ability to make those around him better. He took the Boilermakers to the Rose Bowl for the first time in 34 years and led them to wins over Michigan, Notre Dame, Ohio State and Wisconsin. In short, he's a winner who went 24-13 as a starter on

one of the biggest stages in college football. And Brees, an Academic All-American, did all of that while being surrounded by modest talent.

"His strengths are he went to Purdue, and they went to the Rose Bowl," Savage says. "Basically, it has been on his shoulders, and he carried that team."

The Brees Toolbox

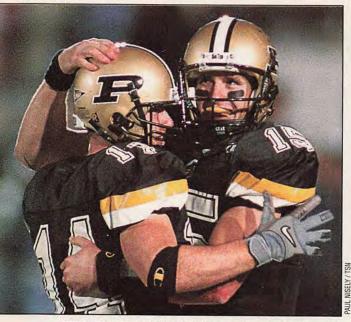
While Brees' intangibles are almost, well, tangible, he doesn't get enough credit for his physical skills. Brees isn't a runner in the Donovan McNabb mold, but he can scramble and evade pressure. He developed much of his nimbleness as a tennis prodigy.

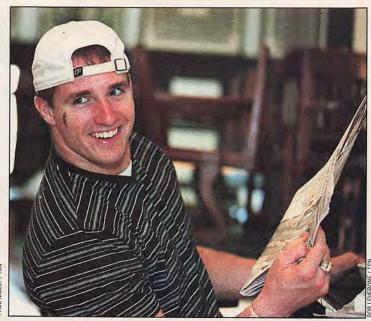
The Purdue offense often put him on the move to throw. And when defenses dropped seven and eight players into coverage, Brees often took off running to exploit chasms. That's one of the reasons why he led the nation in total offense last year on the way to finishing as Purdue's all-time leading rusher among quarterbacks, with 906 regular-season yards. Brees finished 2000 with 546 yards rushing, which was more than Rose Bowl counterpart Marques Tuiasosopo.

Being mobile in today's NFL can't be discounted; witness the success of McNabb and Daunte Culpepper, to mention just a couple. Brees isn't as flashy with his feet as those guys, but he's nifty enough.

Brees' arm strength is as underrated as his speed. First of all, possessing a big-time gun is a luxury, not a necessity. Some of the NFL's

Systems





THE LOOK OF A WINNER: Beyond the impressive individual numbers, Brees performed triumphantly at Purdue and was able to make those around him better. "Basically, it has been on his shoulders, and he carried that team," says Ravens director of college scouting Phil Savage.

greatest quarterbacks-Joe Montana, Fran Tarkenton and Johnny Unitas, e.g.-didn't have cannon arms. "I think Brees' arm is good enough for most of the systems in the NFL," Savage says.

Olson says Brees can throw the ball about 65 yards, which is considered average (Drew Bledsoe can toss it about 75 yards). Brees is capable of delivering most of the passes the NFL demands. One throw he might not be able to make is powering the ball from outside one hash mark, across the field and deep. It takes a mighty heave to deliver that pass on a rope before a defender can close in and bat it away or pick it off. But that throw is rarely needed.

What Brees excels at is accuracy. While many of his passes at Purdue were short, playing in a system that emphasized the pass allowed him myriad opportunities to hone his touch. He is adept at looking off defenders, scanning the field and buying time while receivers break from coverage. He then can put the ball where only they can grab it. "The thing with Drew is just how accurate he is and how he creates things," Notre Dame coach Bob Davie says. "He makes things happen within the framework of that offense. He's an athlete back there. He's a great player, legitimately a great player."

As far as getting rid of the ball, Brees doesn't remind scouts of John Elway, Troy Aikman or Dan Marino. Still, Brees does possess a snappy delivery. More important, he has a high release point over his head. That allows him to avoid outstretched hands of pass rushers. If Brees, who is 6-0, 218, delivered the ball with a three-quarter release, more of his passes would be batted down.

"Brees moves around well enough in the pocket and on the perimeter to where he has opportunities to throw from different points," Rees says. "Those tall defensive linemen get their hands up and bat down balls. Defenses would try to keep a guy like Brees in the pocket. That's one way of defending him because he is mobile, and he makes a lot of plays when he's flushed out of the pocket and on the move.

"So you'd want to keep him in the pocket, but he's a good pocket passer, too. And he has enough slide and mobility to find the creases to throw through."

But when Brees drops, he tends to stretch the ball back.

"Watch him in warmups," Savage says. "When he has the ball at his chest, when he brings it up and back to pass, he really stretches the ball back-quite a ways back behind his shoulder and ear. I think people can react to that in the pros. When he goes to release the ball, I think DBs can react on it. But I think he's really a good quarterback. He has all the mental things, and he's a winner.

"If Brian Griese can do what he has done in Denver, there's no doubt in my mind (Brees) can do that. I think he's more accurate than (Cade) McNown, but he's not as much of an improviser. Brees and Griese (a Pro Bowl selection in 2000) might be a good comparison, but I think Brees is better. I think Brees has a better arm. Griese had a great senior year. Before that, he could hardly get on the field. Brees played three years in college."

Brees is 3 inches shorter than Griese, but how much does size matter? Mark Brunell, McNown, Jeff Garcia and Kordell Stewart all stand 6-1. Jeff Blake is 6-0, and Kurt Warner, Jake Plummer, Charlie Batch, Brett Favre and McNabb are 6-2. And then there's 5-10 Doug Flutie. Sure, good-big is better than good-small, but good-big isn't always available.

"I think height is overrated, personally," says Kitna, who's 6-2. "Steve Young, Joe Montana and John Elway weren't 6-5. I think it's more about what you transfer over from watching tape, studying the playbook and listening to your coaches to the field. I don't care how tall you are. If you can't transfer that information, you'll be no good."

And here's a fact rarely mentioned: Brees is just an inch shorter than Virginia Tech's Michael Vick, whose athletic skills mask any intangible shortcomings. Height never is mentioned as a detriment when Vick's pro prospects are discussed.

But Brees is used to naysayers. He has thrived on being told he can't do it. Resolve is another trait that makes him such an attractive pro prospect. Brees nearly quit football in high school just before the start of his sophomore season, when he was a second-teamer on the junior varsity at Austin (Texas) Westlake High. He was going to focus on baseball. But the starting quarterback got hurt shortly thereafter, launching Brees to the first team. He proceeded to engineer a perfect record.

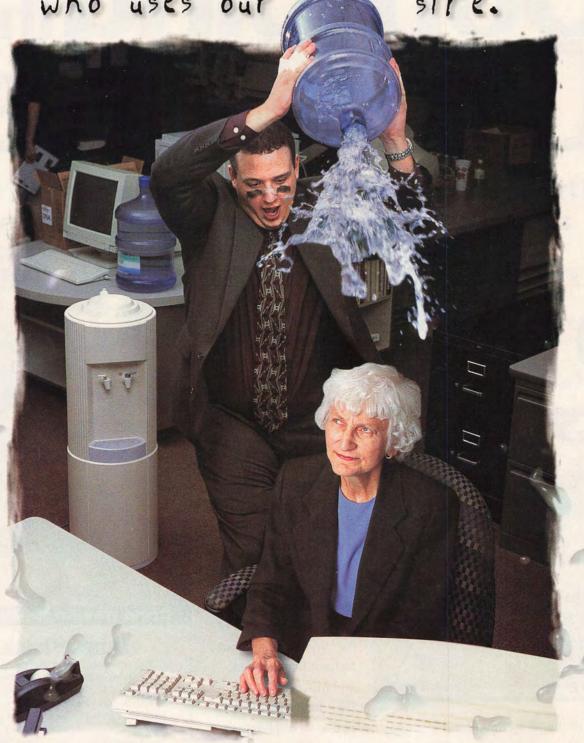
Brees went unbeaten as a junior starter for the varsity team before hurting his knee in the playoffs. He trudged through a tough rehab and went 16-0 as a senior, winning the state's Class 5A offensive MVP award in 1996.

Still, he was shunned as a recruit. Only Purdue and Kentucky wanted a skinny quarterback with a repaired knee. Brees was a backup as a freshman at Purdue, took over as the starter as a sophomore and led Purdue to three consecutive bowl games. He was a two-time Heisman Trophy finalist and holds or shares 19 Purdue records, 13 Big Ten records and two NCAA marks.

"Every sign points to him being successful," Rees says.

Staff writer Tom Dienhart covers college football for THE SPORTING NEWS.

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Combingthe Combine

The lowdown on who's rising and falling after the scouting fest in Indianapolis

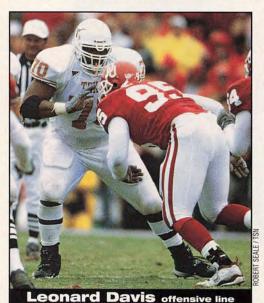
BY The War Room

ver the years, coaches, scouts and other football personnel wonks have met the NFL Scouting Combine with decreased expectations. It used to be that all players participated in the workout portion of the event, but that hasn't been

the case for years.

As the combine evolved, very few of the projected first-round picks participated in more than the basic physical examinations and sit-down interviews.

However, it was a different story this year-at least on the offensive side of the ball. Except for Virginia Tech quarterback Michael Vick and Mississippi running back Deuce McAllister.



most of the blue-chip offensive prospects decided to display their skills. Many of the top defensive players, though, upheld tradition and didn't participate. Here is a position-by-position breakdown of some of the individual performances on the turf inside the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.



Chris Weinke quarterback

Quarterback

With Vick opting out of the passing drills, all eyes were on 28-year-old Chris Weinke, the Heisman Trophy winner out of Florida State. Although Weinke's advanced age remains an unchangeable issue, he impressed scouts with the strength and accuracy of his arm during throwing drills. ... Drew Brees didn't fare as well. Regarded as a potential firstrounder during most of his senior season at Purdue, Brees did little to justify such a billing at the combine. Some believe his eye-popping statistics were a product of the Boilermakers'



Michael Bennett running back

pass-happy system, and not the quarterback's talent. Brees displayed mediocre arm strength that left some personnel folks concerned about his ability to make all the throws at the next level. ... Two names repeatedly brought up at the combine were Josh Booty of LSU and Mike McMahon of Rutgers. Booty, who, like Weinke, played several years of professional baseball, put his impressive physical skills on display and now could be selected on the first day. The buzz about McMahon was his inflated ego turned off teammates and made him difficult to coach. But McMahon put on a terrific throwing show at the combine, making it doubtful he will slip beyond the fourth round. ... Arizona's Ortege Jenkins' decision to break off his workout was a mystery. He attempted two passes, failing to throw the ball more than five yards on each before withdrawing. ... Quincy Carter of Georgia ran great and threw well, which was important for his future considering all the talk that he possibly entered the draft a year too early.

Running Back

There is no sure-fire elite player in this group, but there is a wealth of depth. Michael Bennett, who was a Big Ten sprint champion for the Wisconsin track team, lived up to this title with 40-yard dash times ranging from 4.2 to 4.5 seconds. He also did some nice damage control during the interview process when questioned about his February arrest in Madison, Wis. While character remains an issue, Bennett showed the right attitude during chat sessions and remains a likely firstround pick. ... Another Big Ten running back, Derek Combs of Ohio State, also posted 40 times as low as 4.3 seconds. ... One scout referred to Derek Blaylock of Stephen F. Austin as a "Warrick Dunn with better speed," after he reportedly was clocked at 4.29 in the 40. If you're looking for a sleeper in this year's draft, Blaylock could be a real Rip Van Winkle. ... Want proof that the strength and conditioning program at

Alabama is one of the worst in the country? Crimson Tide fullback **Dustin McClintock** registered a 5.3 in the 40 and completed only seven reps in the 225-pound bench press. McClintock was rated among the top five at his position before the combine, but few teams will consider a lead blocker after such a pedestrian performance. To put some of McClintock's weak numbers in perspective, Kansas fullback **Moran Norris** posted 37 reps in the bench press, and the estimated average for fullbacks is in the low 20s.

Wide Receiver

This is widely regarded as one of the strongest draft classes in recent memory for receivers, but a few of the bigger names stumbled in the drills. After raising his value with a sterling Senior Bowl, Oregon State's Chad Johnson had a disappointing combine that only raised questions among scouts. Johnson's 40 times were in the high-4.5 to low-4.6 range. He appeared to be a lock for the top 10 before the combine, but that's no longer the case. Instead, he's just a good example of why some players refuse to participate in the drills at the combine and choose instead to do individual workouts on campus, especially when it comes to running the 40. ... Freddie Mitchell of UCLA caught the ball extremely well in pass-catching drills and really lifted his stock. ... Florida's John Capel, who ran in the 200-meter finals at last summer's Olympic Games in Sydney, was clocked at a blazing 4.31 in the 40. However, Capel showed little polish when he got to the position-specific drills. The team that takes Capel will need to have patience, because it's clear he remains a project. ... Eastern Kentucky's Alex Bannister showed he might be worth the time it takes to put a shine on an unpolished gem. The 6-4% Bannister ran a 4.43 in the 40 and



reminded some scouts of a guy named Moss now playing for the Vikings.

Tight End

North Carolina's **Alge Crumpler** was clearly the best of all the players working out at his position. He ran a 4.78 in the 40 and showed good consistency while catching the ball and running routes. ... Arizona State's **Todd Heap** did not work out, so the debate about who is the top tight end in this year's draft class had to wait. ... Idaho's **Mike Roberg** (6-4, 256) came in as a relatively unknown commodity but stirred some interest after



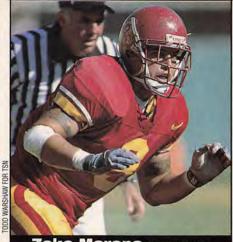
Ross Kolodziej defensive line

posting a 40 time of 4.71. This sent at least two scouts scrambling to find some tape of Roberg in action. ... Virginia's **Billy Baber** and Oklahoma State's **Marcellus Rivers** had excellent workouts, but Notre Dame's **Jabari Holloway** looked very average with a 4.95 40, and South Carolina State's **Arther Love** strained a leg muscle while running unimpressively in the 40.

Offensive Line

The most notable player to lock up a big payday was tackle Leonard Davis of Texas. Already regarded as the best offensive lineman in the draft class, the 370-pound Davis impressed the scouts and solidified his status as a top-10 pick by bench-pressing 225 pounds 33 times. Davis' long arms were supposed to put him at a disadvantage in such tests of strength, making his total even more impressive. By comparison, Florida's Kenyatta Walker managed only 24 repetitions with the same amount of weight on the bar. Walker probably will be the second tackle selected. ... All three members of the Michigan trioguard Steve Hutchinson plus tackles Jeff Backus and Maurice Williams-earned grades you would expect for potential first-round picks in pass-protection drills. ... Notre Dame's Mike Gandy followed up an impressive week at the Senior Bowl with another athletic performance.

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN



Zeke Moreno linebackers

Defensive Line

This is the strongest unit in this year's draft class, but most of the top players didn't participate. Among those declining to sprint or drill were Missouri's Justin Smith, Georgia's Richard Seymour, Florida's Gerard Warren, Florida State's Roland Seymour and Mississippi State's Ellis Wyms. Defensive tackle Shaun Rogers of Texas didn't participate but did use crutches to hobble around the combine while wearing a protective boot. Rogers' ankle injury could scare away teams. ... Georgia's Marcus Stroud benched 225 pounds only 21 times. However, Stroud ran a 5.05 in the 40 and looked agile in the individual drills. ... The two most impressive players were Florida State's Jamal Reynolds, who weighed in at a shocking 268 pounds and ran a 4.68 in the 40, and TCU's Aaron Schobel, who beefed up to 263 pounds. ... After weighing in at 332 pounds, Cincinnati's Mario Monds raised his stock by running a 5.03 in the 40 and by showing rare quickness for a player his size in drills. ... Nebraska's Kyle Vanden Bosch impressed with a 4.65 in the 40. ... Wisconsin's Ross Kolodziej, who registered 290 on the scale and 4.78 on the clock, inspired several scouts to take a second look at him on film.

Linebacker

Already viewed as the unit with the least talent in this year's class, the scouts found little to change that opinion with so many linebackers skipping the drills or the 40. Miami's Dan Morgan, Florida State's Tommy Polley and Brian Allen and Oklahoma's Torrance Marshall did not work out. ... USC's Markus Steele and Zeke Moreno both disappointed scouts by not running. They also looked average in workouts and did not impress anyone with their effort. ... Vanderbilt's Jamie Winborn showed nice athleticism in the individual workouts. But his intelligence will be questioned after he, as one scout said, "consistently screwed up drills to a point of embarrassment." ... Tennessee's Eric Westmoreland and Clemson's Keith Adams both stood out as undersized, and Adams ran an unacceptable 4.85 in the 40. ... Syracuse's Morlon Greenwood and North Carolina's Brandon Spoon made the most of their opportunities. Greenwood ran a 4.65 and showed

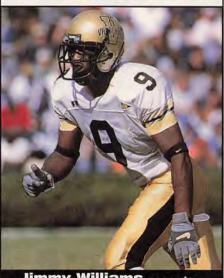
great agility in drills. Spoon, who continues to impress scouts with technically sound mechanics, was more athletic in drills than scouts anticipated.

Secondary

Participation was way down in this group. The only projected first- or second-round picks to participate in drills were Syracuse's Will Allen and Baylor's Gary Baxter. Allen ran a 4.40 in the 40 and further distinguished himself by catching everything and showing fluid movement in the drills. Baxter helped himself with a 4.53 clocking. ... Arizona State's Adam Archuleta was a big disappointment by skipping the workout. He will move from linebacker in college to strong safety in the NFL. It would have been to his benefit to give scouts more than one look-pro day at Arizona State-to see if he can handle it. ... Vanderbilt's Jimmy Williams may have lifted himself into the first day of the draft with a 4.5 time in the 40. He also displayed an impressive ability to change direction in the defensive backs drills. . Two others who improved their stock: Michael Stone of Memphis, who ran a 4.46 in the 40 and produced 17 reps in the bench press; and Kenneth Grant of Kentucky, who logged a 4.43 in the 40 and looked smooth in the drills. ... Strong safety prospect Carl Nesmith of Kansas may have dropped off the radar as a draft candidate with his combine performance. Nesmith posted a poor 40 time and dropped all but two balls thrown to him during the drills.

Odds and Ends

The most puzzling no-show was Miami running back James Jackson. Few players figured to gain from a strong performance as much as Jackson. NFL personnel guys and scouts were stumped for a reason. Considering Jackson missed all of the postseason All-Star games because of an injury, his absence was inexcusable. ... Vick, who most expect to be the first player selected in the draft, chose not to measure his skills against the other quarterbacks at



Jimmy Williams secondary

the combine. However, he did fall short, literally, in another way when the scouts put their tape measures to work and listed Vick's height at exactly 6 feet. Over the years, not too many NFL starting quarterbacks have measured less than 6-0, and Vick barely separated himself from that diminutive group. Still, Vick figures to go No. 1. ... For contrasting reasons, the scales weighed in negatively for defensive end Andre Carter of California and fullback Ja'Mar Toombs of Texas A&M. Carter, projected as one of the top three players at his position, weighed 249 pounds at the combine. Though he played bigger last fall than his listed playing weight of 260 pounds, Carter's lack of bulk



James Jackson odds and ends

has teams concerned about his ability to hold up against the run. Carter could have used some of Toombs' excess girth. Toombs tipped the scales at 282 pounds and, according to reports, abruptly left the event, perhaps headed for the nearest McDonald's. Before Toombs showed up looking like a guard, there was debate about whether he was best suited to play halfback or fullback. Although he didn't stick around for interviews, Toombs certainly answered that question. ... It is rare for an injury to help a player, unless you are Michigan wide receiver David Terrell, who was diagnosed at the combine with a fairly significant foot injury. In fact, Terrell apparently played the better part of his final season with the injury. If Terrell can do the things he did last fall with a gimpy foot, imagine what he can do when fully healthy. ... The Dolphins' interest in wide receiver Reggie Wayne of Miami is reportedly as high as ever. The only question is: Will Wayne be on the board when the Dolphins pick in the second round or will they have to use a first-round pick to secure him?. ... After so many years of Florida State's top prospects refusing to run the 40yard dash at the combine, Seminoles running back Travis Minor received a standing ovation from the crowd of NFL coaches and scouts when he stepped up to run. "So much has been said about the surface advantage that the Seminoles get when running on their home turf," one coach said, "that it was impressive to see Minor compete on what is a notoriously slow track."

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CK DKa

The War Room maps out the first round of the NFL draft

Team

2000 record

*Denotes underclassman.

1. SAN DIEGO

1 - 15

Michael Vick*, QB, Virginia Tech

Chargers officials will have a lot of options to mull over, including trading down to the highest bidder. There also is a strong case to be made for the team to acquire a veteran guarterback and use the top pick on another position. That scenario would afford the Chargers the opportunity to then draft an impact receiver such as David Terrell. But now that the team has dumped guarterback and former first-round pick Ryan Leaf, accepting a big

2. ARIZONA Justin Smith*, DE, Missouri

3-13

The Cardinals finished 30th in the NFL in run defense and last in sacks, and coach Dave McGinnis is determined to bring in players who can help solve those problems. The glaring need might be in the middle, but McGinnis says he is comfortable with his young talent there. Arizona could trade this pick for multiple choices, but if it stays in the No. 2 position, Smith is the best candidate. Simeon Rice is an unrestricted free agent, and Andre Wadsworth's knees might not hold up much longer. Furthermore, Smith's all-around ability—he holds up well against the run in addition to having good pass-rush skills-is exactly what McGinnis is looking for after years of coaching one-dimensional ends who have been targeted in the run game.

salary-cap hit in the process, the best long-term move is to take Vick.

3. CLEVELAND

3-13

David Terrell*, WR, Michigan

Cleveland officials are high on Terrell, and why not? He is the top receiver in the draft and would give quarterback Tim Couch a second legitimate receiver. Cleveland needs a defensive tackle more than another receiver, but it would be hard to pass on the opportunity to pair Terrell with Kevin Johnson. If Terrell is gone—which is quite possible if someone trades up to the No. 1 or 2 spot-look for the Browns to draft the top defensive tackle or running back Deuce McAllister.

4. CINCINNATI

4-12

Richard Seymour, DT, Georgia

The Bengals will be forced to make a decision between drafting a passrushing defensive end, which is probably their top need, or a better prospect at defensive tackle. By drafting Seymour, the Bengals would put themselves in position to defend against the brutal lineup of power runners in the AFC Central that includes Eddie George and Jamal Lewis.

5. ATLANTA

4-12

Koren Robinson*, WR, NC State

The Falcons have a decision to make at quarterback. If they draft Purdue's Drew Brees, they will do so with the knowledge it's a reach in terms of value. Robinson, however, would be of great value with this pick and instantly would improve the Falcons' passing game, especially vertically.

6. NEW ENGLAND

5-11

Leonard Davis, OT, Texas

Defensive tackle, wide receiver and running back are the Patriots' top needs, but drafting the top-rated player probably will be Bill Belichick's modus operandi. Davis clearly is the top offensive lineman in the draft and would be the best player available at this point. His combination of size and agility will make it difficult for a rebuilding team to overlook him. The move would allow the Patriots to move on without veteran Bruce Armstrong and move Adrian Klemm to right tackle, where he looks most comfortable.

7. SEATTLE (FROM DALLAS)

6-10

Gerard Warren*, DT, Florida

As much as Mike Holmgren would love to use his two first-round picks to improve the Seahawks' offense, he realizes that it is the lack of defensive talent that is costing the franchise most. Seattle is said to be high on Warren's potential, and he would give one of the league's worst run defenses a presence in the middle.

8. CHICAGO

5-11

Jamal Reynolds, DE, Florida State

With such a glaring need for another weapon on offense, it might be hard for the Bears to pull the trigger on this pick, but it certainly would give them a formidable front seven. Chicago would be able to smooth Reynolds' transition to the NFL by platooning him with Bryan Robinson, one of the league's top run-stuffing ends. Reynolds would have instant impact as a situational pass rusher and enable the Bears to keep their front four fresh.

9. SAN FRANCISCO

6-10

Dan Morgan, LB, Miami (Fla.)

The 49ers have made it clear they are going after defense with their firstround pick. The glaring need is for an impact pass rusher at end, but the linebacking corps isn't getting any younger, with Winfred Tubbs and Ken Norton Jr. nearing the end of their careers and expected to be released by the team. Morgan is the top linebacker prospect in the draft and has the talent to be one of the more active defenders in the league. With 2000 rookie Jeff Ulbrich flashing potential as a candidate to take over at middle linebacker, Morgan's versatility would allow the 49ers to move him outside, giving them a formidable future at linebacker.

10. SEATTLE

6-10

Chad Johnson, WR, Oregon State

Seattle is the wild card of the draft, with two top-10 picks and a possible interest in trading one of those picks for a veteran quarterback. If the Seahawks keep both picks, however, the two positions most likely to be addressed are defensive tackle and wide receiver. The Seahawks have expressed great interest in Chad Johnson, who has the size and vertical tools to complement their current group.

11. CAROLINA

7-9

Kenyatta Walker*, OT, Florida

Carolina's offensive struggles stemmed from the play of its offensive line, especially left tackle. Clarence Jones, last year's primary starter on the left side, is a better fit at right tackle. Drafting Walker, a future Pro Bowler and certain left tackle prospect, would allow Jones to move to the right side and would upgrade Carolina's entire front.

12. KANSAS CITY

7-9

Deuce McAllister, RB, Mississippi

Coach Dick Vermeil needs a Marshall Faulk-type back, and McAllister is the closest thing this draft has to offer. McAllister could drop all the way to No. 12 with so many questions being raised about his durability, and the Chiefs would jump at the chance to add this versatile back. The pick also would allow Tony Richardson to move back to his more natural position, fullback.

13. JACKSONVILLE

7-9

Andre Carter, DE, California

As the Jaguars look to trim fat off the salary cap, it's hard to predict what position they should address in the first round. We do know they could use another top end to play opposite Tony Brackens, and Carter would be a player who could contribute right away. He does a decent job against the run and could excel in a lot of the one-on-one pass-rushing situations created by the attention given to Brackens. Carter's recent weight loss, however, could make Jaguars officials think twice about him.

14. BUFFALO

Marcus Stroud, DT. Georgia

Stroud's decision to participate in every event at the NFL combine could make him millions of dollars. Stroud, a mammoth run stuffer, proved he also has the guickness and agility to get upfield. He brought a reputation for an inconsistent work ethic to the combine, but his performance in Indianapolis might lift him into the upper half of the first round. Stroud's versatility would be a good fit in Buffalo, where the Bills are looking to play both 4-3 and 3-4

15. WASHINGTON 8-8

Santana Moss, WR, Miami (Fla.)

In his quest to buy a Super Bowl, owner Daniel Snyder seemed to purchase every available impact free agent a year ago. But the one position he overlooked was wide receiver. That oversight essentially kept his team from making the playoffs. Redskins officials would go a long way toward solving their receiving problems by drafting the explosive Moss, who also can take some of the pressure off Deion Sanders by returning punts.

9-7 16. PITTSBURGH

Drew Brees, OB, Purdue

Coach Bill Cowher has told us repeatedly he is sticking with Kordell Stewart as his starter this year, but what about 2002? Stewart is not the long-term answer in Pittsburgh, and a year for Brees on the bench to pick up the offense would be the prudent decision, anyway. If Brees still is on the board at No. 16, the Steelers would have a difficult time passing on him.

9-7 17. GREEN BAY

Quincy Morgan, WR, Kansas State

Antonio Freeman is fast becoming a No. 2 receiver in this league, and Bill Schroeder is nothing more than a No. 3, which is why the Packers need to get a No. 1A with their first pick in the draft. We have other receivers rated higher than Morgan, but we do know the Packers are high on him and feel his combination of size and speed is perfect for what they need.

9-7 18. DETROIT

Fred Smoot, CB, Mississippi State

The Lions could use another pass rusher for the defensive line, another receiver for its aging corps and an interior offensive lineman because of its free-agency situation. But cornerback is the selection. That's because CB Bryant Westbrook's Achilles' injury still is a concern, and Smoot could step in right away for him. Smoot is confident bordering on arrogant, and ready to prove his talents at the NFL level.

9-7 19. NEW YORK JETS

Ken-Yon Rambo, WR, Ohio State One school of thought says to draft a linebacker after cutting Bryan Cox,

Roman Phifer and Dwayne Gordon, but the other says to use the top pick to add another legitimate threat to the receiving corps. Rambo has decent size and would give the Jets a nice receiver to grow with future QB Chad Pennington. Besides, most of the linebacker talent still will be around when the Jets draft in the second round.

10-6 20. ST. LOUIS

Shaun Rogers, DT, Texas

The decision to cut Ray Agnew and D'Marco Farr made defensive tackle the top need in St. Louis, where the lack of a physical presence against the run was a big reason the Rams' defense struggled in 2000. Rogers has mid-firstround talent, but his stock could drop after he showed up at the combine on crutches and with a protective boot on his ankle. If Rogers regains his health by draft day, he could be a steal for the Rams.

21. TAMPA BAY 10-6

Jeff Backus, OT, Michigan

This is the perfect fit. The Bucs are in the market for a tackle and Backus is a sure thing. He isn't the most physically dominating player at the position, but he has a nasty disposition and a resume that includes four years as a starter in one of the nation's top college programs.

22. INDIANAPOLIS 10-6

Jamar Fletcher*, CB, Wisconsin

The Colts need to use this pick to draft the top available defensive playmaker. They certainly could use a run-stuffing tackle and a pass-rushing defensive end, but the selection of Fletcher would allow the organization to cut slumping Tyrone Poole and move Mustafah Muhammad back to his natural nickel

position. For the Colts to take the next step, they need a shut-down corner to take the next step, and Fletcher is a sure thing.

10-6 23. NEW ORLEANS

Freddie Mitchell*, WR, UCLA
Although we feel the Saints' biggest need is cornerback, team officials are saying they are comfortable with their current rotation. That leads us to believe New Orleans will use its top pick to draft a playmaking wide receiver to take some of the pressure off Joe Horn. Mitchell doesn't have great size, but he reminds us of Peter Warrick in terms of lateral movement and ability to make plays in the open field.

11-5 24. DENVER

Ken Lucas, CB, Mississippi

8-8

With Terrell Buckley rumored to be gone and Ray Crockett, Jimmy Spencer and Deltha O'Neal forming the cornerback group, Denver needs to address the future of the position. Lucas would be a good investment because his size is exceptional and he is good enough now to play in the team's nickel and dime packages.

25. PHILADELPHIA 11-5 Rod Gardner, WR, Clemson

Philadelphia must draft a receiver with its first pick, and Gardner has the size, speed and hands to develop into a go-to guy for Donovan McNabb. Gardner would complement Charles Johnson well and should be ready to play as the No. 2 guy right away.

26. MIANI 11-5 Maurice Williams, OT, Michigan

With or without OT Richmond Webb, the Dolphins need to use this pick on a tackle. The scenario is ideal in Miami because it would give Williams-who has a lot of potential but isn't ready yet-time to work his way into the starting role.

11-527. MINNESOTA

Michael Bennett*, RB, Wisconsin

Robert Smith's retirement changed everything for the Vikings. Obviously, team officials would like to add a free agent who can step in and play right away, but the team might be left drafting a running back instead of using the pick on defensive areas of need. Bennett, whose pre-draft off-field actions could cost him, is the type of game-breaking talent who would fit Minnesota's personnel and scheme.

28. OAKLAND 12-4

Derrick Gibson, S, Florida State

This isn't the Raiders' top need, but Gibson certainly would be the top athlete available. He is a roving linebacker type with the speed and athleticism to cover receivers man-to-man, something the Raiders desperately need at safety.

13-3 29. TENNESSEE Steve Hutchinson, G. Michigan

Bruce Matthews can't play forever, can he? Hutchinson would be a nice insurance policy, and he would be given the opportunity to battle Benji Olson for the starting right guard position right away.

30. N.Y. GIANTS 12-4

Nate Clements*, CB, Ohio State

All last season, 10 players had to make up for the team's weak link on defense—the left cornerback spot occupied by Dave Thomas. Despite the unit's overall success and the need for an upgrade in talent on offense, New York would go a long way toward strengthening its defense by drafting Clements, a cornerback who will hold up on his own.

31. BALTIMORE 12-4

Dominic Raiola*, C, Nebraska

Raiola would be the perfect fit for a Ravens team that needs to add some talent to its interior offensive line. The best thing about Raiola is his versatility; he has the skills to play center or guard. If the Ravens decide to re-sign starting center Jeff Mitchell, Raiola could fight Mike Flynn for the right guard position.

For The War Room's complete seven-round mock draft, wait for the compensatory picks to be announced and then go to TSN's Draft Central online at sportingnews.com/nfl/draft/.

STACKING THE ROARD

	ACK		J TH	IE B	UA	KU	
QB		FB	WR	TE	OT	G	C
Michael Vick (1) Drew Brees (20)			David Terrell (2) Koren Robinson (3) Santana Moss (7) Chad Johnson (15)	Alge Crumpler (22)	Leonard Davis (4) Kenyatta Walker (12) Walker (12)	Steve Hutchinson (23)	Dominic Raiola (2
Chris Weinke (4	L. Tomlinson (26) LaMont Jordan (35) Travis Henry (41) Anthony Thomas (44) Kevan Barlow (54)	Dan Alexander (61)	Ken-Yon Rambo (27) Rod Gardner (31) Freddie Mitchell (37) Chris Chambers (42) Quincy Morgan (50) Reggie Wayne (53)	Todd Heap (30)	Jeff Backus (28) Brandon Winey (36) Maurice Williams (43) Kareem McKenzie (57)	Chad Ward (59)	Casey Rabach (58
Quincy Carter (S	James Jackson (76) David Allen (92) Travis Minor (95)	Ja'Mar Toombs (71)	Reggie Germany (66) Bobby Newcombe (85) Marvin Minnis (93) Robert Ferguson (100) Ronney Daniels (104)	Jabari Holloway (81) Arther Love (103)	Marques Sullivan (64) Chris Brown (68) Jarvis Borum (79) Tarlos Thomas (88) Char-ron Dorsey (96)	Omar Smith (75) Floyd Womack (77) Paul Zukauskas (91)	Ben Hamilton (10
Josh Booty (140 Jesse Palmer (1	The second secon	Moran Norris (119) Heath Evans (143)	Vinny Sutherland (115) David Martin (121) Chris Taylor (130) Daniel Guy (146)	Tony Stewart (112) B. Manumaleuna (134) Brian Natkin (145)	Elliot Silvers (110) Jonas Jennings (120) Mathias Nkwenti (125) Kenyatta Jones (138) Ryan Diem (163)	Mike Gandy (109) Matt Light (129) Michael Keathley (137) Russ Hochstein (150)	Hamilton (10
Mike McMahon Josh Heupel (19	THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE	Pat Conniff (175) T. Witherspoon (193)	Steve Smith (154) Latef Grim (178) Alex Bannister (184)	Jevaris Johnson (165) Khary Jackson (172) Bryan Blackwood (188)	Shawn Draper (177)	B. Robertson (158) Bill Ferrario (171) Louis Williams (176) S. Kempenich (187)	Robert Garza (162
Sage Rosenfels M. Tuiasosopo (2 Bart Hendricks () David Rivers (24	(207) Bo Carroll (226) (210) DeAngelo Evans (240)	Willie Miller (211) Jameel Cook (218) Matt Kalapinski (232)	Eddie Williams (205) Sly Johnson (214) Cedrick Wilson (220) Scottie Anderson (228) Andre King (235) John Capel (246) T.J. H'shm'ndzdh (251)	Billy Baber (213) Dauntae Finger (227) Antoine Harris (262)	Stan Bennett (204) Matthew Wilson (212) Kynan Forney (225)	Chris Valletta (203) Chukky Okobi (219) Victor Leyva (234) Adam Haayer (244)	Bruce Wiggins (20 Jeff McCurley (23
Ben Leard (255) Tim Hasselbeck Walter Church (2 Shane Griggs (2 Justin Coleman Rashard Casey ((266) Hodges Mitchell (272) (266) 277) h (283)	Dustin McClintock (254) George Layne (269)	Margin Hooks (263) Richard Williams (278) Kevin Kasper (284) Khori Ivy (293) Dallas Davis (299) J. Fitzsimmons (302) Onomo Ojo (308)	Shad Meier (292)	Kendrick Rogers (271) Damion Cook (287)	Siitupe Peko (261) Ray Redziniak (282) Dave Costa (289) Will Cuthbert (301)	Reed Diehl (270) Matt Lehr (281)

The War Room shows, round by round, where each player should be drafted based solely on his value. The number in parentheses represents the player's overall ranking among all prospects, regardless of position. The numbers sometimes disagree with the round because of the overall strength of this draft.

position. The r	iumbers somen	mes disagree w	nun une round i	because of the o	overali strength	or this draft.	
DE	DT	ILB/MLB	OLB	CB	S	K	P
Justin Smith (6) Jamal Reynolds (14) Andre Carter (18)	Richard Seymour (5) Gerard Warren (10) Shaun Rogers (19) Polk (32)	ES PS	Dan Morgan (8) Tommy Polley (24)	Fred Smoot (11) Jamar Fletcher (13) Nate Clements (25)	Derrick Gibson (16)	Harris (190)	
Cedric Scott (38) DeLawrence Grant (56) Karon Riley (63)	Damione Lewis (33) Marcus Stroud (40) Kenny Smith (47) Casey Hampton (55)	Carlos Polk (32) Kendrell Bell (51)	Markus Steele (39) Jamie Winborn (45) Quinton Caver (52)	Ken Lucas (29) Will Allen (49) William Peterson (60)	Adam Archuleta (34) Gary Baxter (48) Hakim Akbar (62)		
Roland Seymour (74) Aaron Schobel (84) K. Vanden Bosch (97)	Derrick Chambers (70) Willie Howard (78) Ennis Davis (86) Ryan Pickett (98)	Zeke Moreno (69) Torrance Marshall (82) Edg'ton Hartwell (105)	Keith Adams (73) Jason Glenn (83) Morl'n Greenwood (94) Orlando Huff (106)	W. Middlebrooks (67) Tay Cody (72) Andre Dyson (87) Bhawoh Jue (90)	ldrees Bashir (65) Jarrod Cooper (80) Marlon McCree (89)		
David Warren (101) Joe Tafoya (118) Reggie Hayward (133) Ellis Wyms (141)	Mario Fatafehi (114) Ron Edwards (124) Daleroy Stewart (128) Adrian Wilson (142)	Brian Allen (113) Brandon Spoon (127) Matt Smith (147)	Sedrick Hodge (107) E. Westmoreland (122) Roylin Bradley (131) Jer'mih Pharms (148)	Ligarius Jennings (116) Dwight Smith (123) Jimmy Williams (132) Jamie Henderson (149)	James Boyd (108) Cory Bird (117) Leo Barnes (135) Tony Driver (152)	Vitaly Pisetsky (136)	
Saul Patu (156) Kenyon Coleman (170) Dwayne Missouri (182) Fred Wakefield (186)	Mario Monds (157) Shawn Worthen (169) Kris Jenkins (192)	C'rnlius Anthony (166) T.J. Turner (179) Ryan Goven (189)	P. Chukwurah (159) Byron Thweatt (167) Mike Young (180) Anthony Denman (196)	Leonard Myers (160) Alex Ardley (173) Eric Kelly (197)	Robert Carswell (161) Tony Dixon (168) Adrian Wilson (181) Nijrell Eason (194)	Bill Gramatica (174) Jamie Rheem (198)	David Leaverton (155) Nick Harris (190) Dan Hadenfeldt (206)
Ross Kolodziej (200) Anthony Herron (217) Bryan Ray (239) Monty Beisel (243)	John Schlecht (201) Willie Blade (224) Kris Kocurek (249)	Rick Crowell (221) J.J. Jones (236) Josh Lowe (241) Alex Lincoln (252)	Chaz Murphy (215) Anth'y Sessions (222) Chris Edmonds (229)	Michael Stone (216) Kenny Bryant (230) Fred Booker (237) Raymond Walls (247)	J.T. Thatcher (209) Michael Jameson (223) Terrence Carroll (231) Al Blades (248) Ifeanyi Ohalete (253)	Nick Gatto (238)	Rheem (199)
Andre Carter, Ben Ham Kenyatta Walker, Santa Casey Hampton, Ja'Ma	Clv'land Pinkney (268) Loran Kaiser (280) James Reed (296) NISELY / TSN: Jamie Rhe ilton; BOB LEVERONE / 1 na Moss, Quincy Carter; Ir Toombs; DILIP VISHWA IAN FOR TSN: Carlos Poli	SN: Kris Jenkins, ROBERT SEALE / TSN: NAT / TSN: Michael	Clayton White (257) Kevin Rollins (273) Josh Stamer (279) Ben Mezera (294)	Kenneth Grant (264) Rodney Crayton (274)	Corey Hall (265) Julian Jones (275) Carl Nesmith (285) Shawn Forte (295)	Mike Clark (258)	Jason Baker (259)

QUARTERBACK

OVERRATED

Josh Heupel, Oklahoma

Led Sooners to national championship, but system and players around him deserved more credit than they got.

UNDERRATED

Chris Weinke, Florida State

Forget about his age. Has the second-best arm strength and most maturity of any quarterback in this draft.

SLEEPER:

David Rivers, Western Carolina

Displayed consistency and accuracy as a passer in Blue-Gray and Senior Bowl games.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Jesse Palmer, Florida

Yes, he lost a starting job as a senior, but he rates among the top 10 QBs on a lot of teams' draft boards.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Ben Leard, Auburn

East-West Shrine Game and Senior Bowl performances may have proved he lacks arm strength to be a starter.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-3 215 4.60 MINIMUM

6-0 195 5.00

Many college quarterbacks are not evaluated properly because scouts tend to grade production over ability. Most people think size is a huge factor, but the days of the big, immobile, dropback quarterback may be over. A quarterback's most important attributes are feel for the game, an innate sense of his team's offensive philosophy, excellent peripheral vision, a feel for the rush and the ability to maneuver out of trouble. Daunte Culpepper and Donovan McNabb have great size, but they also can run and move around in the pocket, which makes them difficult to sack and contain. That ability to move has become crucial, considering all the blitz packages being thrown at quarterbacks. To play in the NFL, quarterbacks must have enough zip on the ball to put the deep out pattern on a rope. But they also must have good overall touch on intermediate passes and the ability to throw with different velocities. A quarterback with a rifle arm won't necessarily be successful. He also must have leadership qualities, the ability to play under tremendous pressure and a passion for the game, because teams often mirror the personality of their quarterback. The position always will require toughness-mentally and physically-and work ethic and intelligence are critical. Peyton Manning may not be the most gifted player, but his intangibles and preparation put him at the head of the class.

Ratings and text on all positions by The War Room.

hanks to Michael Vick, this isn't the worst quarterback class in the last 10 years, but it's close. Vick is almost guaranteed to be the first pick overall, by the Chargers, and Drew Brees also is a firstround prospect. After that, the talent level drops off considerably.

Chris Weinke is 28, Josh Heupel may be overrated because of Oklahoma's success, and Quincy Carter should have stayed in



school. Josh Booty, Jesse Palmer and Mike McMahon have

moved up the charts after solid combine performances, but they aren't going to wow anybody. And as much as we like Marques Tuiasosopo's competitiveness, he doesn't meet NFL standards in terms of measurables and talent

If you are looking for a sleeper, it is David Rivers, who put on good showings at the Blue-Gray Game and Senior Bowl. Beyond him, there are few players that we would even consider as valuable backup types. *Denotes underclassman.

Michael Vick, Virginia Tech* 6-0 216 4.46 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Donovan McNabb, Eagles Arm strength: Has a rifle arm. Only a couple of NFL quarterbacks have more arm strength. Can make all the throws, including the deep out, and can air it out almost 70 yards. Grade: 8.0

Accuracy/delivery: Displays just average accuracy. Will put some passes in spots it wouldn't seem possible; others are way off the mark. Needs to tweak delivery and mechanics. Winds up a bit too much. Overall, delivery is smooth. Must continue to improve consistency as passer. Grade: 7.0

Field vision: It's the only other knock on Vick, but it's too early to tell. In the Virginia Tech system, he was taught to look at two

possible receivers, then run. Has good football smarts, and will improve and adjust to the complexities of the NFL passing game, but how long will those adjustments take? Grade: 6.9 Running ability: Immediately will be the No. 1 running threat among NFL QBs. Runs like a wide receiver in the open field. Has tremendous quickness, change-of-direction skills, vision, patience and speed. Grade: 8.0 Pocket awareness: Running ability spills over into pocket awareness. Has sixth sense all great quarterbacks have in the pocket (like Joe Montana and Dan Marino). Must learn to use elusiveness, like Donovan McNabb, to buy extra time to find receivers downfield and not always take off running when under pressure. Grade: 8.0 Notable: Was 20-1 as a starting quarterback in college, losing only to Florida State in the national championship game after

Bottom line: It is difficult to disagree with a man's decision to leave college early when he knows he likely will be the No. 1 overall pick. Vick might not have won a national title at Virginia Tech, but he left his stamp on the game. In terms of his maturity on and off the field, he still has some growing to do, but so do most quarterbacks when they enter the NFL. He has the arm and legs to be great but must learn to do the little things. In terms of size, there is nothing to be concerned about. He's stocky, but his arms are longer and his hands bigger than the average person his size. Vick

the 1999 season.



might need a year before he understands NFL passing schemes, but he will get by on pure athleticism until then. When he matures, he could be the best of the more athletic quarterbacks who have entered the NFL the last few years.

Final grade: 7.9

Drew Brees, Purdue 6-01/8 218 4.65 1st round

NFL comparison: Tim Couch, Browns

Arm strength: Has worked to improve it but still lacks a great rifle. Has tremendous touch but can't sit in the pocket and pick apart teams on the perimeter like Brett Favre or Drew Bledsoe. Will struggle to throw the deep out. Mediocre combine performance raised more questions. Grade: 6.0

Accuracy/delivery: Accuracy and quickness are his best attributes. Rarely throws a pass that is not catchable. Has great accuracy with downfield passes. Does outstanding job of leading receivers. Has quick release. Mechanics rarely stray. Can drop the deep ball over coverage. Grade: 7.5

Field vision: Sees the field as well as any of the six first-round quarterbacks in the last two drafts. Is a quick study in the film room. Knows where everyone is on the field. More than anything, he understands the game.

Grade: 7.0

Running ability: Is a scrambler but not a runner. Has quick feet and creates a lot of second chances. Above-average speed for a quarterback. Much like Tim Couch, Brees has a good pocket presence and will surprise defenses with his speed when he takes off and runs. Grade: 6.5

Pocket awareness: Has the footwork, vision and instincts to avoid the rush. Understands the blitz and how to beat it-both throwing and running. Feels the pressure and makes quick decisions. Grade: 7.5

Notable: Big Ten's all-time leader in passing attempts (1,639), completions (1,003), yards (11,517) and passing touchdowns (88). Bottom line: Experience as three-year starter in Big Ten is invaluable. Reads and understands defenses better than most secondand third-year NFL quarterbacks but still will need time to adjust to speed of the NFL. Overall, a solid prospect with enough natural skills to make it as an NFL starter. Might never be great unless he is surrounded by tremendous athletes at the wide receiver position, like Kurt Warner in St. Louis.

Final grade: 7.2

Chris Weinke, Florida State 6-4 238 5.05 2nd round

NFL comparison: Drew Bledsoe, Patriots Arm strength: Has excellent size and arm strength. Puts great zip on deep out patterns. Has learned to throw effectively on the run, though he's a better pocket passer. Dropback, pro-style quarterback with quick release. Grade: 7.6

Accuracy/delivery: Snaps ball off with good quickness and little hesitation in delivery. Accuracy still a problem. Will squeeze one throw into a spot that you never thought he hit, then miss badly on a crossing route or timing pattern that he should nail. Grade: 7.0 Field vision: Studies film and understands defenses, but the game is still too fast for him at times. Even when he knows where to go with the ball, he sometimes misreads how close the defender is to the receiver. Is student of the passing game, however, and is always prepared. Grade: 6.8

Running ability: Will rarely take off and run. Primarily a pocket passer but has improved speed and agility, which is huge for his draft

status. Is now at a point where mobility is not a problem. Grade:

Pocket awareness: Shows good feel for pressure and knows when to release ball or get moving. Definitely has sense of when pocket is collapsing. Can move to create more time. Grade: 6.2

Notable: At 28, he was five years older than the previous oldest Heisman Trophy winner (Billy Sims in 1978).

Bottom line: Would be a better prospect if he were 22. The risk a team takes by drafting Weinke is

that it gets a rookie quarterback who's as old as Drew Bledsoe. Great arm and good size, but has some trouble with accuracy on the deep ball and will need at least another year before he understands the NFL passing game. That will make him at least 29 before he gets his first start. Solid second-round pick; could slip to late in the round because of age and mobility issues.

Final grade: 6.4

Quincy Carter, Georgia* 6-2 223 4.62 3rd round

NFL comparison: Aaron Brooks, Saints Strengths: Has natural ability to buy time under pressure. Feels the rush and shows good vision to locate running lanes. Has solid arm and can make all the downfield throws. Good overall athlete with many skills still to be developed. Weaknesses: Shows too much confidence in arm; forces balls into coverage. Is not very accurate. Has not developed mental part of the game. Doesn't read defenses real well and is inconsistent. Notable: Drafted by Chicago Cubs in second round of 1996 free-agent baseball draft and played two seasons in the minors, hitting .215 in '96 and .211 in '97. Bottom line: Scouts and coaches generally agree that Carter left college prematurely. He needed one more season to hone his suspect skills. Final season at Georgia was marred by injuries and poor play. Final grade: 5.1

Josh Booty, LSU* 6-3 225 4.74 4th round

NFL comparison: Shaun King, Buccaneers Strengths: Has some skills in terms of arm strength and natural athleticism. Throws with good velocity and can make most NFL passes. Mature quarterback with good leadership qualities. Weaknesses: Strictly a developmental player because of erratic play. Very

Marques Tuiasosopo

How frustrating can it be to face former Washington quarterback Margues Tuiasosopo? Ask Stanford.

In 1999 against the Cardinal, Tuiasosopo became the first Division I player to pass for 300 yards and rush for 200 in the same game.

The following year, defensive coordinator Kent Baer's game plan helped Stanford hold

Tuiasosopo to 12 yards rushing and 136 yards passing until late in the fourth quarter.

Then with Washington trailing, 28-24, and less than a minute remaining, Tuiasosopo won it by himself. That's Baer's take, at least.

Tuiasosopo drove his team 80 yards in three plays, tossing the game-winning touchdown pass with 17

seconds remaining.

The Huskies won seven games last season by seven points or fewer and had five fourthquarter comebacks. Those repeated displays of natural leadership helped make Tuiasosopo the Pac-10 offensive player of the year, even though he didn't have the gaudy numbers put up by Oregon's Joey Harrington or Oregon State's Jonathan Smith.

Tuiasosopo's most impressive performances were rarely reflected in statistics. Huskies offensive coordinator Keith Gilbertson says Tuiasosopo is at his best when he rights himself-such as bouncing back from a poor first half or rebounding from a loss.

"He's such a competitor," says Gilbertson, who compares Tuiasosopo with former Huskie Mark Brunell, "He wills everyone around him to play better. He's not thin-skinned about taking coaching and criticism."

When Tuiasosopo led Washington to two fourth-quarter TDs after injuring his throwing shoulder in the Rose Bowl, Huskies coach Rick Neuheisel called him the "epitome of what a quarterback should be." That's high praise from a man who recruited Tuiasosopo as a defensive back. And Neuheisel wasn't the only one.

"He's so strong, he's much like a running back." Stanford's Baer says. "I didn't think he'd be a quarterback. I thought he'd be a running back or a strong safety."

Now Tuiasosopo will try to build an NFL career in an era when teams are looking for big, strong-armed, mobile quarterbacks like Donovan McNabb and Daunte Culpepper.

"He has a good throwing arm, good mechanics, which will only get better when he gets into a system that throws more," Gilbertson says. "And he has escapability, the ability to make a play with his legs. A lot of systems seem to be going in that direction."

-Naila-Jean Meyers



Late in the 1996 International League baseball season, John Simone, the assistant general manager of the Syracuse Chiefs, sat in venerable MacArthur Stadium and watched the team's third baseman toss a

"I remember we were closing down the old stadium at the time and we had a 10 foot-high wall in center field and it was 434 feet from home plate," Simone says. "He was standing on the first-base foul line throwing passes to the batboy and threw it over the fence without much of an effort."

That's how Simone remembers Chris Weinke, who, after hitting a career-low .186 for the Chiefs that season, officially ended his baseball dreams the following January by enrolling at Florida State.

Weinke belatedly accepted the offer of Seminoles football coach Bobby Bowden, who first recruited Weinke along with Charlie Ward in 1990. While Ward went on to win the 1993 Heisman Trophy, Weinke stayed only a few weeks in Tallahassee before accepting a \$350,000 signing bonus from the Blue Jays.

"We had a lot of guys who start out in baseball and realize they've made the wrong choice," says Simone, noting that NBA player Danny Ainge and NFL quarterback Jay Schroeder also spent part of their formative years as athletes in the Toronto organization.

Four college football seasons, two national championship games and one Heisman Trophy later, Weinke stands among a group of soon-to-be NFL players, most of whom are barely past the legal drinking age.

"He's demonstrated an ability to win championships and various college awards. He's shown he can be productive," says John Dorsey, director of college scouting for the Packers. "Then you think about his age, and you consider it's not a bad thing if you don't want to wait for a player to mature. He's smart, stable, and those guys at Florida State really seemed to rally around him."

Weinke's age is either a problem, if a team wants to develop a quarterback, or an advantage, if a team wants a well-seasoned leader. Sure, he will be 29 when the 2001 season begins, but unlike most of the other draft candidates this year, Weinke already has a background in professional sports.

"He was playing with a veteran bunch of ballplayers here," Simone says, "and when you do that, you learn what it takes to be an accomplished athlete." -Mike Kilduff

inaccurate. Deep balls sail. Doesn't make good reads or good decisions with the ball. Tries to force too many passes and doesn't have the necessary feel within the pocket. Notable: Last season, he became LSU's first All-SEC quarterback since Tommy Hodson in 1989. Bottom line: Big-time football prospect out of high school who played professional baseball in Marlins' system for five years. Resumed football career two years ago. Should have returned to LSU, but he's 25 and might have lost starting job, anyway. Because of good showing at combine and weak quarterbacks class, projects as middleround pick. Final grade: 4.2

Jesse Palmer, Florida 6-2 225 4.80 4th round

NFL comparison: Trent Dilfer, Ravens Strengths: Has extremely quick release and good zip on medium- to short-range passes. Has good pocket presence and feels the rush. Mobile inside the pocket. Has arm, size and athletic ability to develop into better allaround quarterback. Weaknesses: Has had spotty playing time with spotty results in his career. Erratic passer with up-and-down touch. Accuracy is a question; passes tend to get away from him. Tends to panic under pressure and make bad decisions. Won't make many tacklers miss outside the pocket. Notable: Born in Toronto; father Bill was a star with Ottawa Rough Riders in the CFL. Bottom line: Was pretty much written off before solid week at Senior Bowl, where he proved he has the natural skills to improve with the proper coaching and situation. Was in tough spot at Florida, but that doesn't excuse the fact he couldn't hold down the starting job. Has better natural skills than most of the quarterbacks in this class, but is he a gamer? Final grade: 4.0

Mike McMahon, Rutgers 6-21/2 213 4.73 5th round

NFL comparison: Cade McNown, Bears Strengths: Good height/weight combination. Best quality is ability to run. Tremendous speed and quickness for a quarterback. Agile runner who feels the pressure and does nice job of creating second opportunities. Has quick delivery. Tough player with will to win. Weaknesses: Mechanics need work. Too inconsistent. Needs to do better job of setting feet, making reads and being patient. Has enough arm strength to play in the NFL. Notable: Threw for more yards (1,259) than any true freshman quarterback in nation in 1997. Bottom line: Made most of his postseason all-star games and workouts, but there still are character questions and his skills are only average. Has shown a better arm than a lot of other quarterbacks, but isn't talented enough to warrant being picked in first four rounds. Final grade: 3.3

Josh Heupel, Oklahoma 6-2 215 4.90 5th round

NFL comparison: Jay Fiedler, Dolphins Strengths: Accurate passer who thrives in pass-oriented offense. Has great vision and does nice job checking off receivers. Has quick release. Throws nice, tight spiral and shows good mechanics. Has quick feet and is smooth in his drops. Can throw accurate long ball. Shows good poise and good leadership qualities. Has it together mentally. Is proven winner. Weaknesses: Doesn't have great zip on ball-deep outs tend to sail-and is more of short-to-intermediate passer. Strength needs to improve. Notable: Began his college career at Weber State, where he played in four games before transferring to

Snow (Utah) Junior College. Bottom line: Great college quarterback who may never be more than a backup in NFL. A great leader with a tremendous story that shows his determination, but his measurables and arm strength make him a risk as an earlyround pick. Final grade: 3.1

Sage Rosenfels, Iowa State 6-4% 217 4.86 6th round

NFL comparison: Rob Johnson, Bills Strengths: Put up decent numbers in run-oriented offense. Has excellent mobility and speed for size, and great overall athletic ability. Can create while on run. Throws soft, catchable ball and shows good touch on deep ball. Weaknesses: Will have to develop into pure pocket passer. Needs to learn to read coverages better. Tends to force too many balls into coverage. Shows average arm strength and must work on consistency as passer; throws some great passes but will float others. Mechanics are a bit awkward; release is too slow and delivery point could use work. Notable: Compiled a 40-6 record as the No. 1 singles player for his high school tennis team. Bottom line: Is bit of a risk as a prospect. Didn't play in pass-oriented offense and mechanics still need a lot of work. But in terms of size and arm strength, he has lot of potential. No better than a No. 3 quarterback as a rookie. Probably not worth picking until late in draft. Final grade: 2.9

Marques Tuiasosopo, Washington 6-0% 216 4.82 6th round

NFL comparison: Charlie Batch, Lions Strengths: Has better than average arm strength and quick release. Can make most throws. Great competitor with above-average

athletic ability. Has good mobility and running skills (quick feet) and senses the rush. Stands in pocket well under pressure. Has solid delivery but will drop down at times, which leads to erratic throws. Weaknesses: Not a pure pocket passer. Too inconsistent and forces passes into coverage at times. Has trouble seeing when kept in the pocket and will telegraph some passes. Notable: Manu, his father, was an All-American defensive tackle at UCLA and a first-round pick of the Seahawks in 1979. Bottom line: Type of competitor every coach wants on his roster. An absolute warrior. Lacks some of the prototypical traits usually required to be successful in NFL. Will get drafted in mid-to-late rounds. Will make a roster because of competitive spirit but may never be better than reserve. Final grade: 2.8

Bart Hendricks, Boise State 6-0 208 4.79 6th round

NFL comparison: Doug Flutie, Free Agent Strengths: Typical blue-collar player. Competitive. Will do whatever it takes to get the job done. Shows toughness in pocket and leadership ability. Has good knowledge and feel for the game. Quick on feet and senses the rush. Weaknesses: Doesn't show great arm strength; passes tend to sail when attacking downfield. Doesn't read field well and tends to force balls into coverage at times. Needs to work on mechanics. Notable: Named Big West Conference Offensive Player of the Year in 1999 and 2000. Bottom line: Intangibles counter some inability to make all the necessary throws. Able to pick apart teams underneath coverage but is erratic in throwing the long ball. With more coaching, could develop into valuable backup. Final grade: 2.5

David Rivers, W. Carolina 6-2% 218 4.85 6th round

NFL comparison: Damon Huard, Dolphins

Strengths: Has good physical skills (size, speed, arm strength). Was tremendous in the Blue-Gray game against some top talent. Can make all the throws and is mobile enough to create second chances in the pocket. Weaknesses: A transfer from Virginia who doesn't have much experience against big-time talent. Must get better at reading complex coverages. Arm is solid, but he has not learned to use it properly yet. Deep ball tails, and he hasn't learned to use great touch on some underneath passes. Still makes lots of mistakes and showed some judgment errors against some top defensive backs at the Senior Bowl. Notable: Led Virginia to a come-frombehind 45-38 victory against Georgia Tech in 1999 before transferring to Western Carolina. Bottom line: A laterising player with a lot of NFL skills. Has good size and the arm to make most throws but will be project. Could go as high as the third round, but teams could balk on his limited experience and his level of college competition. **Final grade: 2.3**

13 Ben Leard, Auburn 6-2 222 5.00 7th round

NFL comparison: Kelly Holcomb, Colts

Strengths: Has matured and improved significantly the last two seasons. Outstanding athleticism for a big quarterback. Has quick feet and can throw on the run. Tough player who will stand in the pocket and take a hit. Has quick release and good feel for reading coverages. Has good over-the-top mechanics. Weaknesses: Struggles with accuracy, especially on deep balls. A bit too streaky. Tends

to go in the tank mentally when things go bad. Decent arm strength. Doesn't have great zip on deep balls, which tend to sail on him. Tends to lock on to primary target. Notable: First quarterback in Auburn history to throw for 400 yards in a game. Bottom line: Has some nice skills, but arm is too inconsistent. Has mental lapses as a decision-maker. Measurables are only average, which is why teams probably will pass on drafting him until the final three rounds. Final grade: 1.9

Tim Hasselbeck, Boston College 6-1½ 206 4.85 7th round

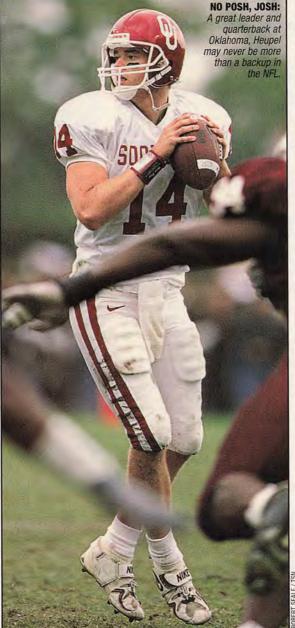
NFL comparison: Jon Kitna, Seahawks Strengths: Has all the intangibles. A capable leader and tough competitor who plays with heart. Mechanics are fine. Has quick release and throws catchable ball. Weaknesses: Was

moderately productive in college. Lacks ideal size and arm strength. Has history of injuries. Does not have enough zip on the deep out. Notable: Son of former NFL tight end Don Hasselbeck and brother of Packers backup quarterback Matt Hasselbeck. Bottom line: Comes from nice lineage but never stood out at college level. Always seemed to be nicked up. Only average skills for NFL prospect. Has good leadership qualities and competes, but is too limited to become starter at NFL level. Final grade: 1.8

Walter Church, E. Michigan 6-3 220 5.00 7th round

NFL comparison: Bobby Hoying, Raiders Strengths: Has definite NFL potential but still is raw. Combines nice size and arm strength. Has great zip on deep out. Works hard at game and continues to improve. Has arm strength to make almost every NFL throw and the potential to improve with better coaching. Weaknesses: Accuracy is a problem; doesn't throw very catchable ball. Has trouble reading coverages and tends to lock on to receivers. Has problems with pressure. Isn't real mobile. Notable: Cousin of former Notre Dame and current 49ers quarterback Rick Mirer. Bottom line: Hard worker with a strong arm and impressive leadership qualities. Could develop into solid backup if a team is willing to work with him for couple of years. Final grade: 1.7

Others: Shane Griggs, Idaho State, 6-4, 190, 4.70 (40 time); Justin Coleman, Nebraska-Kearney, 6-4%, 5.10; Rashard Casey, Penn State, 6-1, 210, 4.50; Jay Stoner, Wyoming, 6-1%, 208, 4.85; Jason McKinley, Houston, 6-2½, 209, 5.25; Cleo Lemon, Arkansas State, 6-2½, 205, 4.90; Ortege Jenkins, Arizona, 6-1½, 227, 4.60; A.J. Feeley, Oregon, 6-3½, 217, 5.23; Deontey Kenner, Cincinnati, 6-0, 204, 4.75.



RUNNING

OVERRATED

Rudi Johnson, Auburn

This straight-line runner decided to leave for the NFL after playing just one year at a high college level.

UNDERRATED

James Jackson, Miami

If fully healthy by camp, could surprise a lot of people with his burst, power and overall feel as a runner.

Correll Buckhalter, Nebraska

Weighs almost 230 and runs under 4.5 in the 40-yard dash. We'll take our chances.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Kevan Barlow, Pittsburgh

His effectiveness catching the ball at the Senior Bowl sold us on his potential to be an every-down back.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Anthony Thomas, Michigan

Scouts question whether the A-Train has the burst or the acceleration to be a premier back.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 5-11 220 4.40 MINIMUM

5-8 195 4.60

Being prolific on the college level doesn't guarantee success for a running back in the NFL. This may be the most misevaluated position in the NFL, because scouts and coaches tend to grade players more on production than ability. Quickness to the hole, explosion, peripheral vision, balance and good hands are important attributes. A lot of backs have great speed in the 40, but they lack quickness in hitting the hole and good running skills, which are more important. Today's running back must be versatile, not only as a runner but as a receiver out of the backfield and as a blocker. Edgerrin James, Marshall Faulk, Charlie Garner and Tiki Barber all have great running skills but also are nightmare matchups in the passing game. The ability to make tacklers miss and avoid head-on collisions not only will lengthen a player's career but lead to more big plays. Blocking is an underevaluated skill in the NFL, and the quickest way for a rookie to find himself on the bench is by failing to show the ability to pick up the blitz and protect the quarterback. Coaches are much more patient with a young back who is developing as a runner than one who is deficient as a blocker. Some players who are primarily inside runners, such as Jerome Bettis and Jamal Lewis, are not used extensively in the passing game but still have great running skills that give them the ability to avoid tackles and create plays in the open field. When you find all these qualities in a player, he probably is headed for the Pro Bowl.

his year's class features some big names, such as Deuce McAllister, Anthony Thomas, LaDainian Tomlinson and LaMont Jordan. Overall, it's as good a group of running backs as there has been in the past five years.

McAllister clearly is the top back, but there are six players grouped behind him who are virtually interchangeable.

Michael Bennett (who left Wisconsin a





year early), Tomlinson, Jordan, Travis Henry, Thomas and Kevan

Barlow all are starting prospects in the NFL and could be picked before the end of the second round. James Jackson is the only other player who has a chance to be a premier back in the NFL, but players such as David Allen, Travis Minor and Derrick Blaylock are intriguing prospects as thirddown backs and return specialists.

Two players to keep an eye on are Rudi Johnson, who left college a year early, and Correll Buckhalter. Both are powerful runners who have the attention of scouts across the league because of the authority with which they carry the ball.

*Denotes underclassman.

Deuce McAllister, Mississippi 6-11/4 221 4.38 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Marshall Faulk, Rams

Inside runner: Unlike most versatile backs, he has the size and power to run between the tackles. Will have to be more patient. Has quick feet, the ability to change directions and the burst to excel as inside runner. Not afraid to lower shoulder, but it's not natural. Must work on running with better leverage.

Outside runner: Combination of speed and quickness is rare. Rarely loses race to corner, and has tremendous second gear in open field. Lacks some creativity, but that should

come with experience. Is huge threat because of speed, burst, acceleration and change of direction. Grade: 7.5

Blocking: Hard to judge. Has shown some ability but wasn't asked to block often. Will need time to learn NFL blocking schemes but has strength and athletic ability. Grade: 6.4

Hands/routes: This separates him from the rest of the group. Has wide receiver-type skills. Will be split out at times in the NFL in the same way the Rams use Marshall Faulk. Has tremendous hands and is game breaker after catch. Grade: 7.7

Durability: A concern. Has battled injuries much of career. Never has been asked to carry entire load, so it's hard to say how long he can last as everydown back. Grade: 6.5

Notable: Played forward and sweeper on a traveling soccer team until high school. Bottom line: All-purpose back

can do it all-run, catch and block. One of the most gifted all-around backs to come out of college in the last five years. Must prove he can handle every-down workload. Sure to be a top-10 pick and will start for his team in Week 1. But can he hold up for an entire 16-game schedule?

Final grade: 7.7

Michael Bennett, Wisconsin* 5-10 208 4.36 ■ 1st round

NFL comparison: Robert Smith, retired Inside runner: Hits the hole hard and rarely dances behind line of scrimmage. Still needs to show more patience and trust his eyes more, but that will come with time. Has great speed and burst. Built well enough to handle punishment between the tackles.



CHARACTER QUESTIONS: Bennett's arrest in February raised a red flag among the scouts.

Outside runner: Speed is phenomenal, which is why he should be a great outside runner in the NFL. Has burst to get to the corner and acceleration to win footrace down sidelines. A bit of a straight-line runner at this point but has agility to improve lateral movement. Grade: 7.7

Blocker: A willing blocker but has some trouble picking up the blitz. Has good lowerbody strength and knows how to anchor against the rush but needs to do better job of recognizing it. Should improve with coaching. Grade: 6.8

Hands/routes: Hands are good, not great. Uses his body too much but has soft hands

Grade: 7.0

when he uses them. Runs solid routes and never seems lost in the passing game. If he gets in the right system, he should be a huge threat in passing game because of speed in open field. **Grade: 7.2**

Durability: A tough, compact runner who had few carries in first two years while sitting behind Ron Dayne. Durability may be best quality. It's rare when a running back enters the NFL with so few carries. **Grade: 7.4**

Notable: Accounted for two of the top four single-game, all-purpose yardage totals in college football last season: a 336-yard performance against Oregon and a 320-yarder vs. Northwestern.

Bottom line: Scouts are high on him because of breakaway speed. Can turn corner and gain extra yards after contact. His arrest in February after he allegedly knocked in a woman's door in Madison, Wis., raised character issue, but Bennett dispelled some concerns with his attitude at the combine.

Final grade: 7.2

3 LaDainian Tomlinson, TCU 5-10% 221 4.45 2nd round

NFL comparison: Emmitt Smith, Cowboys Inside runner: Squatty runner with compact style. Fits bill in terms of technique. Has good center of gravity and shows good lower-body strength. Hasn't had to run much inside while in an option-style offense, so doesn't have lot of experience in this area. Cutback ability is relatively untested. Grade: 6.5

Outside runner: His area of expertise. Has great speed and acceleration. Knows how to get to edge and does great job of turning upfield. Has second gear in open field. Powerful runner not afraid to lower shoulder. Grade: 7.6

Blocker: Untested, but shows willingness and good technique on tape. Attacks defender and does good job of holding ground against blitz. **Grade:** 6.9

Hands/routes: Used Senior Bowl week to prove he can catch. Usually, option backs have developed good hands from catching ball off pitch, but he showed that he also is a capable route runner. Huge threat in open field. Grade: 7.0

Durability: Was nicked up in college but nothing serious. The one advantage of running outside so much is that he hasn't taken the beating some other backs have endured. But therein lies the concern: Is he capable of taking a beating? **Grade: 6.7**

Notable: Online users spent an average of five minutes at the website created to boost his Heisman Trophy candidacy, LTfor2000.com, last season.

Bottom line: One of the most difficult players to evaluate. Was productive in college and had good Senior Bowl showing against some of the top defenders in the nation, yet he has bust written all over him. Has great speed and has shown decent hands but never has had to be productive inside runner, which scares scouts. Has first-round skills but could slide to second round because he's somewhat unproven.

Final grade: 6.9

LaMont Jordan, Maryland 5-10 225 4.57 2nd round

NFL comparison: Jamal Anderson, Falcons

Inside runner: Powerful, low-to-the-ground runner with great build. Has big legs and low center of gravity. Runs with excellent balance and quick hips. Shows good vision but could use more patience; tends to burst ahead before hole opens up. Leg strength enables him to break tackles, and shiftiness makes would-be tacklers miss.

Grade: 7.5

Outside runner: Has only decent straight-line speed and lacks acceleration in open field. Has quickness and shiftiness to break runs outside but won't outrun secondaries at NFL level. Grade: 6.4

Blocker: Just average. Wasn't asked to do much of it in college, so he lacks experience. Technique isn't great. A strong, powerful guy who should be able to learn to block if he wants to. Grade: 6.3

Hands/routes: His strong suit.

Struggled catching ball some during Senior Bowl drills but was successful gduring college career. Has soft hands and runs nice routes, and his average per catch is astounding. Threat in open field.

Durability: Never suffered many injuries in college but also never reported to camp in shape. This could be real problem at next level. If he works at it, he's a flexible athlete with great skills. But he has tendency to let himself slip when not motivated. Grade: 6.6 Notable: Only Ted Brown (North Carolina State) and Amos Lawrence (North Carolina) rushed for more yards in an ACC career. Bottom line: Had it tough in college behind bad offensive line, but skills are there. A complete package despite only decent straightline speed. Has makings of a premier back. Appears to be certain second-round pick.

Final grade: 6.7 Travis Henry, Tennessee

5-10 220 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: Tyrone Wheatley, Raiders Inside runner: Powerful runner with squatty build. Runs low to ground but needs to do better job of raising knees. Bullish runner who breaks lots of tackles and pushes pile. Has good vision and has improved his patience. Will be strong inside runner at next level. Grade: 7.1

Outside runner: Has deceptive speed and subtle moves to get outside. Worked to improve speed, and it shows. Rarely gets caught from behind. Has enough quickness to bounce outside in NFL. Grade: 6.5

Blocker: Very average. Needs to do better job of picking up blitz. Has the size and power to hold up against blitz but gets out of position too much. **Grade: 5.8**

Hands/routes: Another area where he could stand to improve. As receiver, lets ball get into his body too much and looks stiff when

SPOTLIGHT

LaMont Jordan

Most football players wouldn't appreciate being called a mama's boy.

But LaMont Jordan isn't like most football players. He is Maryland's all-time (4,147) and season (1,632) rushing leader. In his final two years, he rushed for 2,552 yards and scored 28 touchdowns.



And because he never knew his father, he says he owes it all to his mom, Marie Jordan.

"I tell everybody that I get my athletic ability from her," Jordan says. "My mom is a great athlete. She played catch with me some-

times, or we'd go out in the snow and have snowball fights. She was definitely an important part of my success.

"This is something that I guess I really just started thinking about when I was in college. My mom did a great job of raising me, and I have a stepfather now who was pretty much around all the time.

"My stepfather is pretty much my father, and my mom pretty much raised me, so if anybody comes out saying that they're my father, I know just to turn the other way."

It wouldn't be surprising to see people start coming out of the woodwork because even though Jordan had a subpar (by his standards) 2000 season, and though there are questions about his attitude and work ethic, he is expected to be one of the top four or five running backs taken in the draft.

"He's a big back, he has good speed, and he shows great toughness," says new Maryland coach Ralph Friedgen, who was Georgia Tech's offensive coordinator the last four years. "And that's what you see in the NFL these days with (Baltimore's Jamal) Lewis and other big backs."

After a spectacular junior season in which he rushed for 1,632 yards and 16 touchdowns, the 5-10, 225-pound Jordan was projected as a high draft choice if he opted for the draft. Instead, he returned to Maryland to pursue his communications degree. But he missed spring practice because of academics, and it was all downhill from there.

"I have no regrets. I don't regret any decision that I make," he says. "This was just another adverse situation, and that's just part of life. I'm glad I came back, although things didn't go the way I wanted on the football field. I did grow a little as a person, and that's what I wanted to accomplish." —Andy Clendennen

catching it. Runs decent routes but never looks fluid or fully comfortable. Grade: 5.9 Durability: Never been seriously injured and never been overworked. Has a lot of carries left in him, because he split time with Jamal Lewis for most of his college career. Flexible athlete who takes good care of himself.

Grade: 7.0

Notable: Named "Mr. Florida Football" in senior year of high school.

Bottom line: Pure runner who knows how to carry ball, when to make cuts, when to hit the hole, etc. May not have greatest speed or agility of the group but is talented nonetheless. Was productive in college and should continue that success as a solid NFL back. Final grade: 6.5

Anthony Thomas, Michigan 6-11/2 225 4.60

2nd round NFL comparison: Richie Anderson, Jets Inside runner: Strong, physical, hard-nosed runner with good size. Runs low to ground and knows how to use legs and arms to break tackles. Has good vision and has noticeably improved his patience. Fights for extra yards and also delivers a blow. A straight-line runner who will not make lots of cutbacks or make a lot of people miss. Grade: 7.3

Outside runner: His downside. Has some burst to outside but does not have great speed and will not beat anyone in a race downfield. Isn't real flashy and lacks changeof-direction ability. Runs hard in open field but not a great outside runner. Grade: 4.5 Blocker: Excellent. Has developed skills and uses size to initiate contact. Has good football mind and knows where and how to pick up blitz. Will be welcome addition to any team's max-protection package. Grade: 7.0 Hands/routes: Projects as 'tweener who will play a lot of fullback and catch ball out of backfield. Has soft hands and runs terrific routes. Not a real threat in open field but picks up necessary yards. Grade: 6.8 Durability: Has had some ankle problems but

really carried the load the last two years at Michigan. The upside is that he didn't have a huge carry count. Grade: 6.5

Notable: Michigan's all-time rushing leader scored more touchdowns (106) than any player in Louisiana high school history.

Bottom line: Stock has risen during pre-draft process because a lot of NFL teams feel he can play tailback and fullback and in a oneback system. Will need to improve blocking skills to play fullback but would be versatile player in the mold of Richie Anderson or Tony Richardson.

Final grade: 6.4

Kevan Barlow, Pittsburgh 6-11/8 238 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: Curtis Martin, Jets Inside runner: Big and strong with great lower-body strength and power. Never has been exceptional inside. Lacks patience and still is learning to pick holes. Will dance too much, wasting time, and doesn't always

run tough for his size. Has shown flashes and improved tremendously as senior but still has some learning to do in this area.

Grade: 6.0

Outside runner: A real threat when he gets outside. Has great speed for size and is shifty runner who can make tacklers miss. Emerged during senior year as a top openfield runner with many brilliant moves. Grade: 6.7

Blocker: Has great base and uses lower body to uproot oncoming blitz. A heads-up player who knows where to be. Usually finishes assignments. Grade: 6.5

Hands/routes: Raised his stock at the Senior Bowl, where he displayed soft hands. Makes a lot of tough catches that backs usually don't make. Grade: 6.2

Durability: Carried the ball a lot but never had any real injury trouble. Is well-built and has been durable to this point. Grade: 6.2 Notable: Scored final touchdown ever at Pitt Stadium, sealing an upset win over Notre Dame in 1999.

Bottom line: The most impressive back at the Senior Bowl. Displayed powerful running style and impressive hands. Has the combination of size and speed to be real sleeper in this draft.

Final grade: 6.2

James Jackson, Miami (Fla.) 5-10 210 4.50 3rd round

NFL comparison: Corey Dillon, Bengals

Strengths: Powerful runner for his size. Runs low to ground and picks up all available yards. Has adequate burst and good agility. Good cutback runner with excellent vision and quick feet. A tough guy who loves contact. Has good feel for passing game. Weaknesses: Needs to add some bulk. Tends to wear down late in games. Patience as runner must improve; doesn't always let blocks develop in front of him. Notable: Played one season at Fork Union Military Academy in Virginia, alma mater of Titans running back Eddie George. Bottom line: Talented back with good combination of size and speed. Has impressive running style and very good vision. Was injured in Sugar Bowl and was unable to play in any all-star game, which hurt his draft status. He damaged his status even more by being a no-show at the com-

David Allen, Kansas State 5-9 192 4.49 3rd round

bine. Final grade: 5.6

NFL comparison: Kevin Faulk, Patriots

Strengths: Has great speed and can get to corner. Stellar punt and kick returner. Good explosion. A pick-and-dart runner. Might be used primarily as return guy and third-down back in NFL. Weaknesses: Undersized. Biggest question is durability. Gets taken down too often by arm tackles. Missed some time as senior after getting injured in first week of season. Pass blocking needs to improve if he's going to be third-down back in NFL. Notable: Set an NCAA Division I-A record in 1998 by returning a punt for a

touchdown in three straight games. Bottom line: A special talent, but a team will have to find a way to get him the ball enough to make him a consistent contributor. Has good hands, is explosive and is an experienced runner. Just doesn't have size to carry more than 10 times a game. Probably a second- or third-round pick because of explosive skills. Final grade: 5.3

Travis Minor, Florida State 5-101/2 196 4.43 3rd round

NFL comparison: Warrick Dunn, Buccaneers Strengths: Outstanding balance and very good hands. Shifty back who shows more quickness than pure speed. Has tremendous vision and instincts. A solid cutback runner who lowers shoulders and runs tough inside for a little guy. A patient runner who sees hole and attacks. Weaknesses: Undersized. Scouts question his durability. Notable: Only player in Florida State history to lead the team in rushing four straight years. Bottom line: He's similar to Warrick Dunn in that he's tough for his size. Still, he's not an every-down back, which is why he's not worth a first- or second-round pick. Final grade: 5.1

Rudi Johnson, Auburn* 5-9 218 4.58 4th round

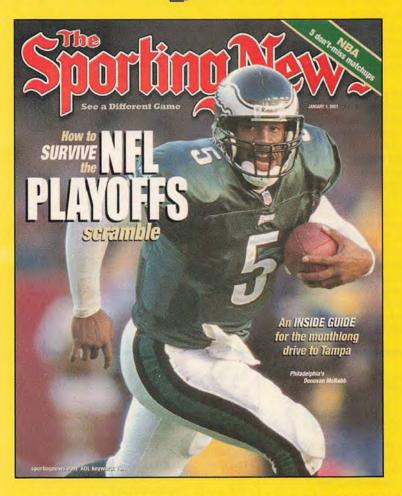
NFL comparison: Ron Dayne, Giants Strengths: Punishing runner between tackles. Has great size and is durable. Will get tough yards in short-yardage situations. Breaks most arm tackles and doesn't go down on first contact. Dangerous if he reaches the secondary. Has deceptive speed.

Weaknesses: Lacks quickness to pick and choose holes. Doesn't move laterally particularly well. Needs to work on blitz recognition and pass blocking. Notable: Set a school record with 10 100-yard rushing games last season, breaking the mark of eight set by Bo Jackson in his 1985 Heisman season. Bottom line: A north-south type runner who's not a threat to get to outside. Can he adjust to speed of NFL? Won't be an every-down back because of inability to make things happen on own. Final grade: 4.8

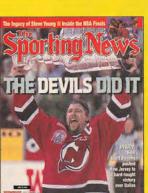
Derrick Blaylock, Stephen F. Austin 5-91/2 190 4.29 4th round

NFL comparison: Michael Wiley, Cowboys Strengths: A typical scatback. Has elite speed and quickness to turn corner. Hits hole quickly and is elusive in open field. Exceptional hands. Weaknesses: Lacks size and durability. Doesn't have ability to break tackles and goes down too often on first hit. Needs to improve ability to run between tackles and make himself more versatile. Notable: Averaged 6.2 yards per carry in his college career and became the first Stephen F. Austin player to be invited to the Hula Bowl. Bottom line: Not an every-down back. Will get most of his action on third downs and as return specialist. Scouts like his ability to make plays as a receiver. Could be a surprise fourth-round pick. Final grade: 4.5

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We know LaDainian Tomlinson rushed for 2,158 yards and scored 22 touchdowns in 2000. And we know his career numbers eclipsed most of those compiled by another former Western Athletic Conference back-Marshall Faulk, the NFL's MVP last year.

But does it scare NFL scouts that Tomlinson's statistics were amassed mostly against teams from the less-than-prestigious WAC? "Nonsense," says Rams general manager Charley Armey. "The level of competition doesn't factor in when you're looking at the backs, because if that were the case, nobody would have taken a chance on one of the greatest backs in the history of football, out of Jackson State (Walter

"They evaluate the back based upon his skills, not the competition."

"I think the level of competition comes into play when you're looking at a Division II or III player," says Phil Savage, director of college scouting for the Ravens. "You look at the player first and foremost, and the level of competition only comes into it when you're trying to compare players at the same position with similar credentials."

In 1999 against Texas-El Paso, Tomlinson became the first back in Division I-A history to rush for 400 yards in a game, finishing with 406 yards on 43 carries. Last season, Tomlinson torched the Miners again, this time for 305 yards. But UTEP, contrary to popular opinion, was far from the worst defense in the country in 2000; the Miners finished 63rd out of 115 Division I-A teams in total defense.

"It's not like it was all against bad teams," Savage says of Tomlinson's production.

"When you have a player of his caliber, I'm sure (teams) were preparing a scheme to stop him," says John Dorsey, the Packers' director of college scouting. "So he's usually facing defenses with eight or more men in the box, and he continues to be productive."

Tomlinson was the third straight player to lead the NCAA in rushing in back-to-back years, following lowa State's Troy Davis (1995-96) and Texas' Ricky Williams (1997-98). While Williams seems to have found success in the NFL with the Saints, Davis was released last year after three nondescript seasons (446 career rushing yards) with New Orleans. The question for scouts is: Which way will Tomlinson go?

"If the guy was highly productive at every level," Dorsey says, "you've got to think he will continue to be highly productive at our level." -Mike Kilduff

Correll Buckhalter, Nebraska 5-11% 229 4.48 4th round

NFL comparison: James Stewart, Lions Strength: Explosive at times. Big back with impressive speed for size. Fundamental runner who stays square and keeps good leverage. Finds the opening. Willing blocker. Catches ball with hands. Weaknesses: Not a threat to get to corner, with just a decent second gear. Doesn't have change-of-direction skills and doesn't make too many people miss. Notable: Finished career as the eighth-leading rusher in Nebraska history. Bottom line: Straight-line runner but showed some decent agility in East-West Shrine Game. Powerful back who could take a lot of short-yardage/goal-line carries away from a team's premier back. Has great speed for size. Could be surprise in this draft. Final grade: 4.2

Kevin Brown, UNLV 6-1 225 4.60 4th round

NFL comparison: Duce Staley, Eagles Strengths: A physical runner with good size who can push the pile and break tackles. Runs with knees high and does nice job of initiating contact. A flow runner who sees a hole and hits it. Has the quickness to make a guy miss. Weaknesses: Lacks breakaway speed and tends to get strung out too far before getting upfield. Limited experience as a receiver. Some concerns about his off-field problems (before transferring to UNLV from Washington State, he pled guilty to felony residential burglary charges in 1999). Notable: Rushed for 1,046 yards as a sopho-

more at Washington State in 1998 (with six

100-yard games) before being kicked off

team. Bottom line: Impressive runner who has the size to make an impact between the tackles. Lacks speed. No more than a midround guy who will become an adequate backup in the NFL. Final grade: 4.1

Cedric Washington, Boston College 5-9% 200 4.51 4th round

NFL comparison: James Allen, Bears Strengths: Has great vision and recognizes cutback lanes. An instinctive player who can find holes quickly. Exceptional change-ofdirection skills. Plays faster than his 40-yard time. Weaknesses: Needs to develop better feel for passing game, both as blocker and receiver. Effective for his size in college but might be small for NFL. Might dance too much, which could cut his NFL career short. Notable: Set a Massachusetts high school record with 2,881 rushing yards in 1995. Bottom line: Showed lots of flashes in college but never had breakout season. Split playing time as senior, and his skills seemed to diminish some. Has good size, good speed and exceptional quickness but needs to put it all together. At best, a late fourth-round pick, but don't be surprised if he's still around in the sixth round. Final grade: 4.0

Marcel Shipp, Massachusetts 5-10% 213 4.65 5th round

NFL comparison: Sammy Morris, Bills Strengths: Has great change-of-direction skills and ability to get extra yard. Good instincts and vision. A tough runner who will take a lot of hits. Keeps low center of gravity. Has good hands and solid feel for passing game. Blocks well in pass protection. Weaknesses: Lacks great burst, which will

hurt stock. Will have trouble turning corner in NFL. Needs to improve open-field running. Notable: UMass' all-time leader in carries, rushing yards and all-purpose yards. Bottom line: One of the most productive Division I-AA runners the last three years, but lack of straight-line speed will hurt him. Has good size and runs with great burst but may not have acceleration to be every-down back in NFL. Final grade: 3.7

Derek Combs, Ohio State 6-0 190 4.50 5th round

NFL comparison: J.R. Redmond, Patriots Strengths: Decent size/speed combination. Has big-play potential and enough shiftiness to make plays in NFL. Has decent hands and is tough to take down in open field. Weaknesses: Runs too high. Is inconsistent. Skinny legs are concern when it comes to durability. Notable: Averaged 10 yards per carry as high school senior (214 carries, 2,149 yards) and scored 24 touchdowns. Bottom line: Never achieved potential in college. Doesn't lower shoulder enough and isn't technically sound as runner. Could be steal if-and it's a big if-he ever plays up to his talent level. Final grade: 3.3

Jamie Wilson, East Carolina 5-10% 211 4.43 5th round

NFL comparison: Richard Huntley, Steelers Strengths: Elusive runner who catches ball well out of backfield. Has good burst to hole. Nice vision. A slasher-type back. Weaknesses: Marginal ability to break tackles. Not real durable and lacks power. An upright runner with average change-of-direction skills. Notable: Majored in industrial

technology at East Carolina. **Bottom line:**Would be good fit in pass-oriented offense. Has the speed to exploit a spread-out defense and is threat in open field, but his speed is too straight-line and he lacks the consistency to be every-down back.

Final grade: 3.0

19 Jeff Chaney, Florida State 5-10% 189 4.46 6th round

NFL comparison: Tiki Barber, Giants Strengths: Extremely quick back who hasn't had much chance to play. Has good vision and cutback ability. Runs with good balance. Can break tackles. Shows nice feel for passing game and catches ball away from body. Good change-of-direction skills in open spaces, and makes tacklers miss. Weaknesses: Lacks experience; was stuck behind FSU teammate Travis Minor. May not have what it takes mentally. Notable: Returned blocked punt for a touchdown against Virginia Tech in 2000 Sugar Bowl. Bottom line: One of the most talented players on FSU's offense, but rarely got to show off talent. Has only decent size, which hurts him, but he's a burner. Looks like he may get a shot as a late-round pick for a team that needs to add speed to its backfield. Final grade: 2.8

20 Bo Carroll, Florida 5-9% 175 4.44 6th round

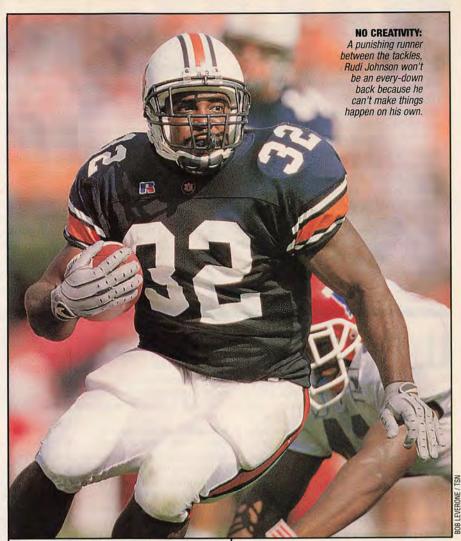
NFL comparison: Jamel White, Browns Strengths: Solid, all-around back with blazing speed. Has excellent balance, elusiveness and change-of-direction skills. Has big-time playmaking ability. Versatile player who could play receiver or halfback in NFL. Could be effective as return specialist. Weaknesses: Lacks size. Has marginal strength to break tackles. Notable: Averaged 11.3 yards every time he touched the ball in college. Bottom line: The NFL doesn't allow many 175-pound running backs to succeed, so he needs to find the right situation to make it. Absolutely flies and is elusive with ball, but size limits what he can do. Final grade: 2.5

DeAngelo Evans, Emporia State 5-8½ 221 4.65 6th round

NFL comparison: Michael Pittman, Cardinals Strengths: Skillful runner with good vision, patience and instincts. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Has some power and runs low to ground. Good body control and change-of-direction skills. Weaknesses: Undersized and fragile. Has history of injuries and might never be able to carry a full load. Lacks open-field acceleration to be third-down back. Has limited value. Notable: Broke most of fellow Wichita native Barry Sanders' Kansas high school rushing records. Bottom line: A transfer from Nebraska, he has skills but lacks size and speed to become great in the NFL. At best, a mid- to lateround prospect. Final grade: 2.3

22 Dee Brown, Syracuse 5-10½ 203 4.60 6th round

NFL comparison: Skip Hicks, Redskins Strengths: Great speed, quickness and agility.



Quick feet and tremendous hands.

Weaknesses: Lacks size and strength to be every-down back. Will have to make it as a nickel back. Must improve pass-blocking skills. Notable: Already has earned psychology degree; now enrolled in graduate school studying education. Bottom line: A pure athlete who can help in a lot of ways, but not a premier ballcarrier. Lacks breakaway speed in open field. Will be decent backup but never a starter or specialist. Final grade: 2.1

23 Derek Homer, Kentucky 5-9 196 4.55 6th round

NFL comparison: Autry Denson, Dolphins
Strengths: Good overall quickness. Shows
nice initial pop upon contact. A sound,
instinctive runner. Runs good routes and
knows when to break them off and sit down
under coverage. Takes a lot of hits and stays
in game. Weaknesses: Scouts still have questions about his running ability. Was primarily
a receiver in final college season. Notable:
Holds Kentucky state high school records for
rushing yards, rushing touchdowns and total
TDs. Bottom line: Has a lot of pluses in terms
of running routes, hands and blocking ability
but clearly isn't an every-down back. Final
grade: 2.0

Tony Taylor, Northwestern State* 5-10 190 4.49 7th round

NFL comparison: Chad Morton, Saints Strengths: Above-average speed and quickness. A shifty back with great change-ofdirection skills. Runs under control, and can make people miss. Good hands. Could be perfect third-down back. Weaknesses: Lacks great size. Never will be an every-down back. Isn't powerful enough. Shows little blocking ability. Notable: Owns the top two season rushing totals (1,503 and 1,441 yards) at a school that produced NFL backs Joe Delaney and John Stephens. Bottom line: Record-setting junior season at I-AA level convinced him to leave college early. Never is going to be a premier guy but can help as kick returner and third-down back. Final grade: 1.9

Others: Hodges Mitchell, Texas, 4.50 (40 time); Larry Ned, San Diego State, 5-104, 209, 4.68; Reggie White*, Oklahoma State, 5-11, 225, 4.62; Ricky Williams, Texas Tech, 5-7, 195, 4.55; Deonce Whitaker, San Jose State, 5-6, 177, 4.55; Mike Cerimele, Penn State, 5-10, 235, 4.70; Dominic Rhodes, Midwestern State, 5-9, 209, 4.56.

OVERRATED

Moran Norris, Kansas

There are only so many blocking fullback jobs in the NFL. He still has to improve in that area.

UNDERRATED

Matt Kalapinski, Maryland

Does so many things well. Still growing as player. Every time we watch him on tape, we see more potential.

Jameel Cook, Illinois

Moved to fullback only a year ago. Has developed decent blocking skills and moves like halfback.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Ja'Mar Toombs, Texas A&M

Mental picture of Toombs carrying would-be tacklers into the end zone rings in the memories of a lot of scouts.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Dustin McClintock, Alabama

Few teams will consider a lead blocker with such pedestrian numbers as McClintock had at the combine.

OPTIMUM 6-0 240 4.60 MINIMUM 5-10 230 4.80

There are two types of fullbacks in today's NFL. One is the big, physical player who does little but block. The second type, which is harder to find, is a smaller player with more versatility. The first type is very attractive to teams that use a power running game and have a franchise running back playing behind the fullback. Just ask the Broncos' tailbacks about the value of fullback Howard Griffith, or the Titans' Eddie George about his fullback, Lorenzo Neal. Those guys rarely carry the ball, but they are devastating lead blockers and are like another offensive lineman in the running game. However, this type of fullback limits what an offense can do. If he does not run the ball a lot or catch the ball out of the backfield. defenses will know the offense is likely to run when he is in the game. The more versatile second type of fullback will catch passes out of the backfield and show some open-field running skills. Though he is at least an adequate blocker, he is not a devastating lead blocker. A player like that provides matchup problems for defenses. For example, the Redskins' Larry Centers has made a career as a receiver out of the backfield, but he rarely runs the ball or blocks. It is very difficult to find this type of player. When you do, he can be a tremendous asset in terms of offensive versatility.

nlike most years, the fullback class will make an impact on the first day of the draft. Both Dan Alexander and Ja'Mar Toombs can contribute as ballcarriers, and Heath Evans is a bruising runner with good hands. Moran Norris is a more conventional fullback with great isolation blocking skills-a somewhat dying breed in the NFL-but he is another first-day prospect. The surprise of this group could be Matt Kalapinski, who has



impressive-albeit untapped-skills. The surprise addition of five junior fullbacks bol-

stered an already-decent class. *Denotes underclassman.

Dan Alexander, Nebraska 5-113/4 244 4.47 (40 time) 2nd round

NFL comparison: Mike Alstott, Buccaneers Inside runner: Has the size, lower-body strength and running style to develop into big-time inside runner. Shows good vision, ability to cut and patience. Has great burst and acceleration through line of scrimmage. Runs a bit high for a power back but can be taught to break that habit. Grade: 7.2 Outside runner: Has better speed than most think but is more productive between the tackles. If he can get outside with a head of steam, he's a huge threat. But he'll have trouble winning races outside. Grade: 5.6 Blocker: Not a prototypical fullback, because it has never been his position. Gets job done in pass protection and could probably develop as run blocker if asked to. Grade: 5.2 Hands/routes: Must work on this area, because success in NFL will revolve around his versatility. Runs solid routes and is threat when he gets the ball outside or downfield. But his overall receiving skills-especially hands-are inconsistent. Grade: 5.5 Durability: Divided carries at Nebraska with three other guys, so never really had to

carry the load. A durable athlete with good

stamina. Takes care of himself in terms of working out and preparation. Grade: 6.8

Notable: Considered to be Nebraska's most involved athlete ever when it comes to communitv work.

Bottom line: We're extremely high on him. Could play fullback, tailback or even H-back if he improves his hands. A physical, punishing runner with outstanding speed for size and running style. If he slips past second round, it would be a mistake.

Final grade: 6.0

Ja'Mar Toombs, Texas A&M* 6-0 282 4.62 3rd round

NFL comparison: Jerome Bettis,

Strengths: A bulldozer as a runner and blocker. Combines great size with good speed and agility. Moves extremely well and has above-average blocking skills. Has potential to be dominant short-yardage runner. With good coaching, could develop into fine blocker. Weaknesses: Has some trouble as isolation

blocker in terms of keeping head up and finding his man. Needs to finish blocks; legs sometimes stop before they should. Could be big threat in passing game if receiving skills improve. Notable: Scored 26 rushing TDs at Texas A&M, the 10th-best total in school history. Bottom line: Before he showed up at the combine looking like a guard, there was some debate whether he would play halfback or fullback. His weight increase of 27 pounds answered that question. You want to give him the ball more than an average fullback because of his ability to carry defenders with him. Final grade: 5.7



DAN THE MAN: Alexander is versatile enough to play fullback, tailback or, possibly, H-back.

Moran Norris, Kansas 6-01/8 240 4.68 4th round

NFL comparison: Lorenzo Neal, Titans Strengths: Has exceptional upper-body strength and is a punishing runner. With decent feel for passing game, good-enough hands and better-than-average speed for size, he can develop into consistent threat as receiver out of backfield. Tough and loves to hit people. Has good change of direction for a fullback. Vision as runner allows him to

bounce plays to outside, something most fullbacks can't do. Weaknesses: Has history of fumbling. Tends to run too upright. Needs to use strength better as runner and develop more feel as pass blocker. Tends to struggle with reading defenses and picking up blitzes. Notable: Produced a 515-pound bench press, a 347-pound power clean lift and a 31-inch vertical leap in college. Bottom line: A physical specimen with impressive athleticism for size. Could be impact player in NFL if he learns to run with more leverage and protect the ball.

Final grade: 4.6

Heath Evans, Auburn* 6-0 238 4.64 4th round

NFL comparison: Terrelle Smith, Saints Strengths: The complete package: a reliable receiver who runs hard and has good combination of size and speed. Hard hitter. Does nice job as lead blocker. Shows flashes of burst and acceleration. Powerful shortvardage runner. Weaknesses: Is not great at any one thing. Lacks breakaway speed. Not one of top five blocking backs in this class. Notable: Averaged 6.2 yards per carry last season and did not have a run for negative yardage. Bottom line: Surprised scouts by leaving school early but has some impressive skills. Offers so many good qualities, it would be difficult to let him slip past fourth round. Final grade: 4.1

Pat Conniff, Washington 6-0 245 4.79 5th round

NFL comparison: Jon Ritchie, Raiders Strengths: Well-built, better-than-average athlete with great attitude for game. Sound blocker. Works to get in position, drives his legs and finishes blocks. Doesn't have great size but knows how to get leverage. Can catch ball but not a big threat as receiver or runner. Weaknesses: Concern is he can't do a whole lot more than block. Not real fluid in pass routes. Won't add much as a runner except in short-yardage situations. Notable: Father and grandfather played football at Army. Bottom line: Outstanding blocker with perfect attitude for position. Plays with tremendous motor and always fights to finish. Has soft hands and decent speed for size. A team will have to be convinced it can turn him into receiving threat with some coaching. Final grade: 3.4

Terry Witherspoon, Clemson 5-11% 270 4.59 5th round

NFL comparison: Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala, Steelers

Strengths: Has great size and is straight-line runner. Powerful. Runs with good leverage and likes to initiate contact. Has tremendous measurables and runs great 40 time for his size. Weaknesses: Has had trouble with weight fluctuation and never developed into the college back most expected. Has some problems holding on to ball and really isn't great isolation blocker. Notable: Appeared in this magazine a year ago as the 12th-rated



GOING ALONG FOR THE RIDE: When Toombs runs with the ball, he carries defenders with him.

fullback, then decided to return to Clemson for another season after graduating with a degree in industrial engineering in August 2000. Bottom line: He's not the player he should be. Fumbles too often and never has developed running or blocking skills. Might be worth risk because he has ton of talent. But if you're looking for a guy to play right now, he's not it. Final grade: 3.1

Willie Miller, Nebraska 5-11% 248 4.77 6th round

NFL comparison: Sam Gash, Ravens Strengths: A prototypical fullback with great strength and size. Solid blocker with good pop on contact. Gets to target and keeps feet moving. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Aggressive player who likes to hit. Has decent vision and surprising change of direction when carrying ball. Weaknesses: Inexperienced ballcarrier. Doesn't have ideal speed. Still needs to prove he has tenacity to be an every-down fullback. Notable: Graduated in December 2000 with a degree in communication studies. Bottom line: A bit of an unknown prospect, because he was the fullback in Nebraska's I-formation option offense. Lined up close to line of scrimmage, and if he didn't block, he was asked to push the pile to pick up short yards as runner. Doesn't run real well but has shown some flashes. Might be worth getting into camp to test his potential with the ball in his hands. Final grade: 2.7

Jameel Cook, Illinois* 6-0 226 4.50 6th round

NFL comparison: Richie Anderson, Jets Strengths: Great athlete for fullback. Has solid hands and runs smooth routes out of backfield. Understands passing game and could develop into real threat as receiver. Aggressive runner and physical player. Weaknesses: Hasn't found his position yet.

Always a 'tweener in college, he's neither a great blocker nor a premier runner. Still has work to do in terms of positioning as lead blocker. Doesn't always finish blocks. Notable: Caught six passes (one for a TD) in first career start in Illinois' upset win at Michigan in 1999. Bottom line: Worth the risk if he's still around in sixth round. Could pan out as short-yardage receiver out of backfield. Has size and aggressiveness to improve as blocker. Final grade: 2.6

Matt Kalapinski, Maryland 6-01/8 226 4.70 6th round

NFL comparison: Jim Kleinsasser, Vikings

Strengths: Physical, hard-working player with good all-around skills. Smart, tough and willing to throw body around. An aggressive and efficient blocker. Can catch ball.

Was never featured runner or receiver in college but has potential in both areas. Weaknesses: Average blocker and runner, but has improved in both areas. Needs to continue to increase strength; lacks some pop at initial contact as blocker. Notable: Rushed for a game-high 51 yards and caught a 25-vard touchdown pass in the Hula Bowl. Bottom line: Looks better every time you watch him on tape. Wasn't asked to do a lot but block for LaMont Jordan at Maryland. Showed some flash when he did carry ball. His frame should allow him to add bulk. Worth a late-round selection. If nothing else, you'll get a full effort. Final grade: 2.4

Dustin McClintock, Alabama 6-1% 250 5.30 7th round

NFL comparison: Jon Witman, Steelers Strengths: Has great size and could be moved to tight end in NFL. Tough, dominating lead blocker who attacks with great leverage. Has strength and power to contribute in short-yardage situations. Weaknesses: Was not used much in passing game or as a runner in college. Lacks great change-of-direction skills and pure speed. Notable: Loves to fish and hunt in spare time. Bottom line: Was rated fifth until he had a disastrous workout at the combine, where he ran a 5.3 40 and completed only seven reps in the 225-pound bench press. Unless a team loves his blocking skills and needs a guy to protect its premier runner, he could slip right out of the draft. Final grade: 2.0

Others: George Layne*, TCU, 6-0, 251, 4.75 (40 time); Ed Wilder, Georgia Tech, 6-1%, 261, 4.90; Lloyd Garden*, Cincinnati, 5-11, 231, 4.85; Wes Ours, West Virginia, 6-0, 275, 5.00; Tommy Banks, LSU, 6-01/4, 270, 5.15; Ronnie Robinson, North Carolina, 6-0½, 241, 4.82; Darvel Bivens, Northwestern State, 5-101/2, 250, 4.75; Dewayne Miles, West Texas A&M, 6-01/8, 251, 4.90.



WIDE RECEIVER

OVERRATED

Rod Gardner, Clemson

Made a lot of big plays during his senior year, but his so-so speed and occasional drops have scouts worried.

UNDERRATED

Reggie Wayne, Miami (Fla.)

Probably the most polished receiver in draft, with reliable hands, nice route-running skills and feel for passing game.

SLEEPER

Andre King, Miami (Fla.)

The No. 3 wide receiver at Miami, he showed impressive route-running ability at the East-West Shrine Game.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Chad Johnson, Oregon State

Boosted his value immeasurably with one of the best weeks of practice ever at a Senior Bowl.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Marvin Minnis, Florida State

His own worst enemy. Missed national title game due to academic trouble; attitude problem arose at Senior Bowl

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-2 190 4.40 MINIMUM 5-8½ 170 4.65



All teams would prefer to have wide receivers with great deep speed, but there simply aren't enough of them. As a result, quickness at the position has become almost as important as speed. The ability to separate from a defender is critical. There are a lot of receivers who have speed but cannot get off tight coverage, and there are a lot of so-called possession receivers who may not have great 40 times but know how to establish position and separate from defensive backs. In today's NFL, a wideout also must be physical enough to get off the jam at the line of scrimmage and catch the ball in traffic. If he allows himself to be pushed out of his route, he will be a quick casualty. As surprising as it may seem, good hands and the ability to snatch the ball are sometimes underrated by scouts. If you can't catch the ball consistently, you can't play. Size is another attribute that is more critical than ever. Big receivers cause huge matchup problems for corner, especially in the red zone. The days of the "smurf" receivers are all but gone; there are only a few who make a difference. In nickel and dime packages that feature three and four receivers on the field at the same time, at least one needs to be a speed guy who can stretch a defense and is capable of catching the home run. However, there also is a huge need for an inside receiver who can be physical, catch the intermediate passes in traffic, take hits and make first downs. When you get both types of receivers on the same team, you can do a lot of damage.

n another example of the impact underclassmen will have on the 2001 draft, David Terrell and Koren Robinson have the talent to be selected among the top 10 picks. If you add Freddie Mitchell to the equation, three of the top seven receivers had at least one year of college eligibility remaining. Overall, this is a strong class, with



10 receivers likely to be drafted in the first two rounds. But you have to go

back only to last season to find examples of receivers being overrated and underproductive as rookies. The 2000 class had just as many standouts as this one, and we all know how unprepared that group was for the rigors of a 16-game season.

*Denotes underclassman.

David Terrell, Michigan* 6-2 200 4.43 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Keyshawn Johnson, Bucs Hands: Rarely drops a pass, and usually makes the tough catches. Can make onehanded catches and catches in a crowd. Shows good timing to jump and grab ball at highest point. Grade: 7.9

Patterns: Runs above-average routes but has room to improve. Tends to oversell routes and make too many moves. Is sharp in and out of cuts. Knows how to get good positioning on defensive backs. Grade: 7.6

Run after catch: Is more of a strider with great open-field speed. Has a second gear and shows good burst after the catch. Tough to tackle because he runs with shoulders down. Grade: 7.8

Release: Hardly ever gets jammed at the line. Uses footwork, body and hands to avoid the jam. Is a student of the game; watches a lot of film. Knows defenders' tendencies and how to get a clean release. Grade: 7.9 Blocking: Can be a good blocker, when in the mood. Has good size and strength. Often will wall off defenders instead of driving



NO. 1: There is nothing Terrell, a sure top-five pick, can't do when he puts his mind to it.

them out of the play. Grade: 7.5 Notable: Holds Michigan record for most receptions in a bowl game (10 vs. Alabama in 2000 Orange).

Bottom line: Terrell is the complete packagesize, speed and playmaking skills. He lacks the height of Randy Moss but makes all the ordinary plays and most of the great ones. A sure top five pick and probably the best athlete in the draft.

Final grade: 7.9

Koren Robinson, North Carolina State* 6-1 200 4.38 1st round

NFL comparison: Eric Moulds, Bills

Hands: Makes catches in traffic and also catches the routine balls. Shows good concentration and knows how to reach out and snatch the ball before it gets to his body.

Patterns: It's rare for such a young player to run precise routes, but Robinson does. Takes great pride in his cuts, shows burst in and out of breaks. Grade: 7.8

Run after catch: Blazing fast with a nice stride. Shows the ability to cut at an instant. Does good job of holding on to ball and sees the field in front of him. Grade: 7.9

Release: He'll have to work some in this area, but he still does an impressive job of shaking press coverage. Has the quickness to avoid the jam but will need to learn better technique and increase his strength. Grade: 7.6

Blocking: Not very strong but got away with it in college. Played only two years in college and still has a lot of growing to do in terms of muscle mass. Grade: 7.5

Notable: Broke Torry Holt's NC State records for 100-yard receiving games in a season (9) and a career (15).

Bottom line: Robinson's decision to forgo his final two years of eligibility has had a big impact on the Class of 2001. His presence on draft boards could bring about trades and all sorts of predraft activity.

Final grade: 7.8

Santana Moss, Miami (Fla.) 5-10 175 4.40 1st round

NFL comparison: Isaac Bruce, Rams

Hands: Shows excellent hands when concentrating. Great elevation and acceleration on the deep ball. Occasionally will drop an easy one because he tries to run before catch. Needs to improve his attention to detail.

Grade: 7.0

Patterns: Has developed into a standout route runner. Came to Miami on a track scholarship, so it took time to learn techniques. Great quickness. Turns defensive backs around with hips and feet. Accelerates in and out of cuts. Shifty player who can run by people or fake them out. Grade: 7.7 Run after catch: Has tremendous speed and acceleration after catch. Shows great body

control and could have the best hip movement of any receiver in the draft. Huge threat after the catch. Grade: 7.9

Release: Wins most battles at line of scrimmage with great quickness and moves but can have trouble if corner gets hands on him and is able to jam him. Grade: 7.0

Blocking: Doesn't work real hard as blocker and lacks size and natural strength to improve much. Grade: 5.0

Notable: Won both the triple jump and the long jump at the 2000 Big East Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

Bottom line: David Terrell likely will be drafted higher than Moss, not because he is better, but because he is bigger and has more potential. But Moss has an almost perfect combination of game-breaking and possession skills.

Final grade: 7.6

Chad Johnson, Oregon State 6-2 195 4.45 1st round

NFL comparison: Torry Holt, Rams

Hands: Catches the ball better than most young receivers. Goes after the ball with his hands, works to catch ball away from body. Will drop some catchable balls but not very many. Grade: 7.1

Patterns: Johnson really can set up a defensive back. Has tremendous body control, good quickness and shows burst out of cuts. Has potential to be an exceptional route runner. Grade: 7.2

Run after catch: Has good, not great speed, but he's a graceful strider. Much like his

cousin, Keyshawn Johnson, Chad runs faster than he looks. Has good vision as a runner, and his quickness and hip flexibility allow him to put sensational moves on defensive backs in the open field. Grade: 7.5 Release: Uses impressive upper-body strength and crafty moves to get off the line. Has quickness to work against just about

APTLY NAMED: Few

receivers are better blockers than Rambo, who loves contact.

anybody in the NFL. Grade: 7.6

Blocking: Is tough but sometimes doesn't work at blocking as much as he should. Has the strength and tenacity to be an aboveaverage blocker, but will he work to become better? Grade: 6.8

Notable: Attended same junior college (Santa Monica, Calif.) as Rams receiver Isaac Bruce. Bottom line: Johnson has a winning attitude and is a natural leader. He also has a nice bloodline; Bucs WR Keyshawn Johnson and Titans CB Samari Rolle are his cousins .

Final grade: 7.3

Ken-Yon Rambo, Ohio State 6-0 190 4.50 2nd round

NFL comparison: Marvin Harrison, Colts Hands: This is the biggest area of concern.



A TOUGH CATCH: Mitchell's elusiveness in the open field makes him difficult to track down.

He drops too many catchable balls, especially for a guy with his skills. Can make the acrobatic catch and receptions in traffic but needs to be more consistent. Grade: 6.5 Patterns: This is another area that needs work. Has tremendous quickness, speed, body control and change of direction but hasn't worked hard enough to use those skills to improve his routes. Grade: 6.9 Run after catch: Tough to cover after the catch. Has rare tools in terms of open-field running and shows good vision when turn-

> ing upfield. Grade: 7.2 Release: Does a nice job in this area. Not real big but uses his quickness and competitiveness to beat press coverage. Grade: 7.0 Blocking: Does an unusually good job of blocking for a receiver, especially for someone with moderate size. Rambo seems to enjoy the contact. Grade: 7.1

> Notable: Ken-Yon means "strong warrior" in an African dialect. Bottom line: Can be as good as he

wants to be. Has all the physical tools to develop into a playmaker at the next level but needs to work hard and show better concentration.

Final grade: 6.9

Rod Gardner, Clemson 6-21/4 216 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: Marcus Robinson, Bears Hands: Makes a lot of tough catches and shows great concentration when he's pushed to the limit. Does have some mental lapses and will drop catchable balls. Overall, he has soft hands and knows how to approach the ball. Grade: 6.8

Patterns: A physical, powerful route runner who rarely gets pushed out of his routes. Has good quickness but lacks great speed. Gets better at running routes each year, but he's never going to be great because he lacks great speed. Grade: 6.9

Run after catch: He's explosive with the ball

in his hands, but again, he's not blazing fast, so he's not going to outrun many NFL defenders. Does show good vision and lateral movement. Grade: 6.6

Release: Hardly ever gets jammed. Has great size, power and quickness, which allow him to dictate his own route. Rarely gets pushed around. Grade: 7.4

Blocking: He's competitive, big and strong-a good combination as a blocker. Does have to work on technique. Grade: 6.7

Notable: Set Clemson season record for receptions with 80 in 1999.

Bottom line: Gardner will make up for his lack of straight-line speed by using his body to create positioning. Never will be great vertical threat but has the size and leaping ability to win jump balls.

Final grade: 6.8

Freddie Mitchell, UCLA* 5-11 183 4.45 2nd round

NFL comparison: Peter Warrick, Bengals Hands: Has exceptional hands. Catches just about everything thrown his way. Has bigplay flair and knows how to position himself

to make the great play. Grade: 7.2

Patterns: Has tremendous body control and quickness. Gets in and out of his cuts with lightning quickness but will get pushed around some. He'll be a better perimeter route runner than inside guy. Grade: 6.8 Run after catch: Mitchell is tough to track down after the catch. Has speed and quickness, and footwork is impressive. Looks comfortable with the ball and knows how to get

Release: This will be an area of concern for a smallish guy. He's competitive and uses his quickness to break free from press coverage, but his lack of size and strength may hurt him. Grade: 6.1

Blocking: Likes to mix it up, but he's not a big factor as a blocker. Will do his job and make sure he gets to his guy but not much more. Grade: 6.2

Notable: Led his high school basketball team to a Florida state championship in 1997. Bottom line: Though he left school early, he has more know-how than most receivers in this class. Might not be the most athletic receiver available, but his intangibles, quickness and speed, are appealing.

Final grade: 6.6

upfield. Grade: 7.0

Chris Chambers, Wisconsin 5-111/2 209 4.37 2nd round

NFL comparison: Peerless Price, Bills

Hands: Has shown a lot of improvement but still has too many lapses. Just doesn't look as smooth as some of the top receivers. Grade: 6.0 Patterns: Built more like a running back, with great quickness and outstanding body control. Speed is sensational. Uses size to get positioning. Has worked to become a solid route runner and has the speed to stretch a defense vertically. Grade: 6.8

Run after catch: He's pretty much a running back in the open field-looks extremely comfortable with the ball. Has great straight-line speed and quickness. Will turn short catch



Santana Moss was brought to the University of Miami for one reason: speed.

But it wasn't speed on the field that earned Moss his scholarship; it was speed on the track. The soon-tobe first-round draft pick arrived in Coral Gables on a track scholarship.

After playing wide receiver in a high school offense that emphasized the run, Moss found few college suitors who wanted him for his football skills. Western Michigan, Eastern Michigan and Utah State were among the Division I-A programs that offered him a scholarship to run track and play football.

Credit former Miami coach Butch Davis for envisioning how Moss' track talents could translate into success on the football field. In the fall of 1997, Moss accepted a scholarship to run track at Miami and the opportunity to walk on as a wide receiver. At 5-9, 180, Moss worked his way onto the team but got off to a slow start. He caught just 14 passes as a freshman, and the Hurricanes endured their first losing season in 18 years.

The next season proved to be a coming-out party for Moss, in more ways than one. He caught 30 passes for 631 yards and eight touchdowns and also took second in the 55-meter dash at the 1998 Big East Indoor Track & Field Championships.

But it wasn't until 1999 that the rest of the nation started to notice the multi-sport star. Moss sliced through secondaries for 54 receptions, 899 yards and six touchdowns. His biggest day-nine receptions for 180 yards and two touchdowns—came against eventual national champion Florida State.

That season, Moss also volunteered for the role of punt returner, which allowed him to put his track skills to use in the open field.

"Running track helped me in football, but most of all returning punts," says Moss, who returned two punts for touchdowns that season. "When I would return a punt and find myself in the open field, I would think of my track coach yelling, 'Pump your legs, keep straight, control your body.' That voice in my head helped me a lot."

Now, Moss seems destined to be a difference maker in the NFL.

"He's that special type of player who can break open a game with a return or a big catch," one AFC scout says. "With his work ethic, physical ability and willingness to do whatever a team may ask of him, he's in line for a long, successful career in the NFL." -Mitch Smith

into a long run. Grade: 6.9

Release: Has great power for a receiver; there are few defensive backs who can beat him up. Also has the quickness and speed to beat them with his feet. Grade: 7.0

Blocking: Needs to concentrate more on this area. Has the size and power to dominate defensive backs but only rarely does so.

Grade: 6.2

Notable: Played in seven games as a guard on Wisconsin's 1997-98 basketball team before deciding to concentrate on football. Bottom line: Chambers is an unusual receiver, with a running back build and very average hands. Played in a system at Wisconsin that wasn't very receiver-friendly, so we still don't know how good he really is.

Final grade: 6.5

Quincy Morgan, Kansas State 6-03/4 204 4.44 2nd round

NFL comparison: Kevin Johnson, Browns Hands: Approaches the ball well and generally has soft hands, but he drops passes because of mental lapses. This is an area that definitely needs improvement. Grade: 5.9 Patterns: Another area in need of improvement, but the good news is he is coachable. Has tremendous natural talent but still needs to work on the mental part of the game, including his understanding of defenses and hot reads. Grade: 6.0

Run after catch: Morgan is an exceptional athlete, with great size, good speed and allaround athleticism. Has the tools to be a home run hitter. Grade: 7.1

Release: Rarely gets held up at line. Uses size, strength and speed to avoid getting jammed, something that should serve him well in NFL. Grade: 6.8

Blocking: Very average, but he's willing to improve. Will throw his body around and generally likes contact. Grade: 6.2

Notable: Had a seven-catch, 199-yard, twotouchdown game vs. Nebraska last season. Bottom line: Morgan will only get better at the NFL level. Has all the measurables that scouts look for and is coachable. Needs to improve his intermediate route-running skills and become a more consistent pass catcher. Final grade: 6.3

Reggie Wayne, Miami (Fla.) 6-0 195 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: Cris Carter, Vikings

Hands: Exceptional concentration and hands. Catches the ball away from his body and does a nice job of looking it in. Rarely drops catchable balls and shows some flair for making the big catch. Grade: 7.1

Patterns: Very crisp route runner. Doesn't have great speed but is precise. Quick in and out of cuts. Uses body well to shield defender and knows how to set defensive back up with double moves. Grade: 6.6

Run after catch: Lacks great speed, which will hurt him in NFL. He's smooth as a runner and looks comfortable with the ball in his hand, but he's not going to break a lot of short throws for big plays. Grade: 5.6 Release: Has decent size and good strength but could struggle a bit against bigger corners. Needs to improve his technique against press coverage. Grade: 6.0

Blocking: Is willing to mix it up but never gets great positioning and never drives through a block. Will take a big shot if he has somebody lined up but won't search for a block. Grade: 6.0

Notable: Miami's all-time receptions leader. Bottom line: Wayne bounced back wonderfully from knee surgery two years ago, showing remarkable resilience. A polished receiver with above-average tools. He's quicker than fast but projects as an intermediate receiver rather than a vertical guy.

Final grade: 6.2

Reggie Germany, Ohio State 6-2 184 4.50 3rd round

NFL comparison: Germane Crowell, Lions Strengths: Has an outstanding frame and shows excellent footwork. Is impressive on stop-and-go routes. Shows great body control and ability to turn around defensive backs. Plays under control and shows a second gear when needed. Has natural hands. Weaknesses: Needs to improve his routes and consistency. Could stand to bulk up-he gets pushed around too often. Notable: High school teammate of Wisconsin cornerback Jamar Fletcher. Bottom line: Germany may be his own worst enemy. Has tremendous tools but doesn't take the game seriously. Had some academic problems at Ohio State that reflected his attitude and work ethic. From a skill standpoint, he is a late firstround prospect, but he hasn't worked hard enough and his mental lapses are too costly. Final grade: 5.8

Bobby Newcombe, Nebraska 5-103/4 189 4.48 3rd round

NFL comparison: Terrence Wilkins, Colts Strengths: Is a multipurpose player. Started career at quarterback but will be a slot receiver in the NFL. Can return kicks. Is a pure playmaker. Has good speed and exceptional quickness. Is a high-stepper with quick feet and excellent change-of-direction skills. Weaknesses: Still needs a lot of technical work as a receiver, in terms of catching the ball, running routes and reading defensive coverages. Notable: Born in Sierra Leone, Africa. Bottom line: Newcombe is a valuable "team" player. He's willing to sacrifice for the good of the team and is a good lockerroom guy. Has sensational natural tools. His ability to return kicks, in addition to his receiving skills, is what makes him such an intriguing prospect. Final grade: 5.4

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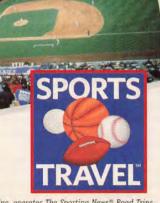
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Marvin Minnis, Florida State 6-01/2 168 4.40 3rd round

NFL comparison: Qadry Ismail, Ravens Strengths: Has good quickness and speed. Catches the ball in a crowd. Runs pretty good routes. Has excellent body control and balance. Is a deep threat and a factor in the intermediate game. Weaknesses: Is a bit on skinny side. Has a small frame without much room to add weight. Is not a home run threat. Was academically ineligible for Florida State's national championship game and then showed up at the Senior Bowl with a chip on his shoulder-a red flag for scouts. Notable: Caught a school-record 98-yard touchdown pass against Clemson last season. Bottom line: Minnis is light and carries some baggage, but he can play. He gets pushed around some, but he has great speed. He's a guy who knows where to be and always seems to make plays. If his attitude can be adjusted, Minnis has a chance to be a consistently productive player. Final grade: 5.3

Robert Ferguson, Texas A&M* 6-2 217 4.45 3rd round

NFL comparison: Rob Moore, Cardinals Strengths: Quick and explosive. Has the ability to turn short passes into touchdowns. Shows soft hands and can catch on the run. Weaknesses: Has only one year of Division I experience. Doesn't make a lot of catches in traffic and can be pushed off his routes. Runs sloppy routes at times. Notable: Caught seven passes for 174 yards, including a 93yard touchdown, against Wyoming last season. Bottom line: Ferguson played two years at a junior college, then transferred to Texas A&M for one season. Has a lot of great tools, including solid hands and tremendous quickness, but his limited experience is somewhat of a concern. Final grade: 5.1

Ronney Daniels, Auburn* 6-0 205 4.49 3rd round

NFL comparison: Derrick Alexander, Chiefs Strengths: Has natural ability to catch the ball. Catches each pass with his hands, away from his body. Has a good combination of size and speed. Makes plays after the catch. Weaknesses: Needs more coaching to hone his route-running skills. Tends to round off patterns, instead of making sharp cuts. Notable: Spent three years as a pitcher in the Expos' organization. Bottom line: Daniels needs more tutoring to become an everydown player. He most likely will be used as a No. 3 or 4 receiver as a rookie and will see most of his time in multiple-receiver sets. Final grade: 5.0

Vinny Sutherland, Purdue 5-81/2 187 4.47 4th round

NFL comparison: Wayne Chrebet, Jets Strengths: A great competitor. A slot receiver with great speed and quickness. Shows an exceptional second gear. Plays under control. Is quick in and out of cuts and runs

sharp routes. Has good hands. Also can return punts. Weaknesses: Size is biggest drawback. Might be better suited as a thirddown back or a return specialist. Notable: Accounted for touchdowns four different ways at Purdue-as a receiver, runner, passer and punt returner. Bottom line: He's undersized but a playmaker nonetheless. Sutherland is lightning quick with great hands and a feel for the passing game. He never will be a No. 1 receiver, but his quickness should allow him to excel as a slot receiver and return specialist in the NFL. Final grade: 4.7

David Martin, Tennessee 6-31/2 215 4.65 4th round

NFL comparison: Oronde Gadsden, Dolphins Strengths: Good athlete with great size. Has above-average hands; looks the ball in. His size and power could move him up the list. Weaknesses: Extremely raw. Lacks great speed. Is a long strider but not very fluid. Needs to improve route running. Tends to play out of control. Notable: Didn't emerge as a first-teamer at Tennessee until senior year. Bottom line: Martin would not be the prospect he is if it were not for his size. He will be a possession receiver in the NFL, using his size and hands to make plays. He's a bit of a risk, because you don't know how much his lack of speed will hinder his production. Final grade: 4.6

Chris Taylor, Texas A&M 5-101/2 184 4.40 4th round

NFL comparison: Charles Johnson, Eagles Strengths: Does not play as fast as his 40yard dash time. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Also returns kicks and punts. Has great burst off the line. Could be a perfect fit as a third-down slot receiver. A natural playmaker who is a threat to run after the catch. Has good hands. Weaknesses: Loses focus from time to time, makes only marginal adjustments to the ball in the air. Needs to run better routes. Has some trouble getting off the line. Needs to improve his body control. Notable: Played defensive back, quarterback, receiver, running back and kicker in high school. Bottom line: Taylor may be one of the more overrated players in the draft. He's a return threat but not exceptional. He is gifted but makes too many mental mistakes. Final grade: 4.4

Daniel Guy, Jackson State 6-1% 203 4.56 4th round

NFL comparison: Tai Streets, 49ers Strengths: Played opposite the Chiefs' Sylvester Morris in 1999 but has shown an ability to make plays. Has nice size/speed combination. Shows good initial quickness and is a deep threat. Has excellent build. Weaknesses: Needs to refine route-running ability. Must improve blocking skills. Loses focus and drops passes from time to time. Notable: Helped Jackson State average 386.5 yards per game last year. Bottom line: Clearly not the player Morris was at Jackson State

and may not be a very good pro. Has good size, but he's not very fast and has concentration lapses. Final grade: 4.1

Steve Smith, Utah 5-9 176 4.55 5th round

NFL comparison: Az-Zahir Hakim, Rams Strengths: Has explosive quickness and acceleration and good hands. Is excellent after the catch. Has great vision as a runner and is a technically sound route runner. Plays faster than his 40-yard time indicates. Weaknesses: Lacks size. Has a history of injuries. Has trouble beating press coverage and gets pushed off his routes too often. Notable: Averaged 147.5 yards per game in all-purpose yardage last season. Bottom line: Smith is a shifty, quick prospect with big-play ability, but size really limits his potential. A slot receiver, at best. Final grade: 3.9

Latef Grim, Pittsburgh 5-11% 188 4.55 5th round

NFL comparison: Kevin Lockett, Chiefs Strengths: A tough, physical receiver with decent speed. Runs solid routes and adjusts well to ball. Has reliable hands and the ability to make things happen after the catch. Shows more quickness than pure speed but is a skilled runner in open field. Weaknesses: Might be overrated in terms of potential. Shows marginal quickness and agility out of breaks. Notable: Has written poetry that has appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Bottom line: Grim should be a quality No. 3 receiver but lacks the explosiveness to stretch a defense. Final grade: 3.4

Alex Bannister, Eastern Kentucky 6-41/8 202 4.43 5th round

NFL comparison: Shawn Jefferson, Falcons Strengths: Has excellent athletic ability. Is blessed with a rare combination of height and speed. Is one of the top downfield threats in the draft. Weaknesses: Drops too many balls. Doesn't run precise routes and isn't very crisp in and out of breaks. Doesn't show very good field awareness and tends to get stuck in traffic. Notable: Led the Ohio Valley Conference in receptions (71), receiving yards (1,122) and TD receptions (12) last season. Bottom line: Don't be fooled by the workout numbers; Bannister is a long way from being an impact player. Final grade: 3.3

Eddie "Boo" Williams, Arkansas 6-4 235 4.65 6th round

NFL comparison: Joe Jurevicius, Giants Strengths: Physical receiver who does an excellent job of breaking from press coverage. Has solid hands. Tends to catch the ball with his body but is a reliable target. Could become an excellent blocker if he focuses on it. Great size and strength. Weaknesses: A height/weight/speed prospect who showed little in college. Works to get open but needs to become a more effective route runner.

Seems to lack a feel for the passing game. Notable: Cousin of former Chiefs kick returner Tamarick Vanover. Bottom line: Has tremendous size but may be a wide receiver/tight end 'tweener. He's an easy guy to defend. Final grade: 2.9

Sly Johnson, Miami (Ohio) 5-9% 170 4.40 6th round

NFL comparison: Todd Pinkston, Eagles Strengths: Has great game speed. Gets behind coverage. Has natural hands; catches the ball away from his body. Runs solid routes. Makes plays. Does a great job on stop-and-go routes. Loses a lot of defenders with his natural body control. Weaknesses: Undersized. Has trouble breaking from press coverage. Gets pushed around by physical defensive backs. Notable: Owns second-best receiving yards per catch average (18.8) in Miami history. Bottom line: Johnson will have a lot of trouble right away in the NFL. He's too slender and gets pushed around too much. Final grade: 2.7

 Cedrick Wilson, Tennessee 5-10 180 4.55 6th round

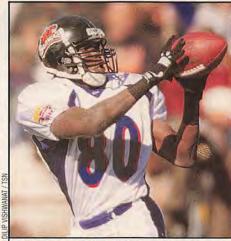
NFL comparison: Brandon Stokley, Ravens Strengths: Size is a real concern, but he knows the game and how to get open. Is elusive. Will make big-time catches in a crowd. Shows tremendous quickness, especially in and out of his cuts. Weaknesses: Has more quickness than pure speed. Is not physical. Tends to lose concentration and drop passes. Notable: Was a terrific quarterback prospect coming out of high school. Bottom line: The more we see him play, the more we like him. At the Senior Bowl, Wilson seemed to have no problem matching up against toplevel talent. Final grade: 2.6

Scottie Anderson, Grambling 6-2% 179 4.55 6th round

NFL comparison: Sylvester Morris, Chiefs Strengths: He has a big frame to grow into, and he's a long-strider. Moves well and shows reliable hands. Was an extremely productive receiver at Grambling, showing the ability to get deep as well as return kicks. Weaknesses: Lacks strength and bulk. Gets pushed around too much and will struggle getting off the line in the NFL. Seems to lack body control at times, and his quickness is not impressive. Notable: Earned a spot on the All-SWAC first team last season. Bottom line: Anderson is a deep threat with good height. Has decent speed but isn't overly quick. Can help in the red zone and may make some big plays, but he's not a full-time receiving threat. Final grade: 2.5

Andre King, Miami (Fla.) 5-11 200 4.60 6th round

NFL comparison: Jerome Pathon, Colts Strengths: An excellent route runner, technically sound. Mature player who understands what it takes to succeed. Hard worker with good all-around athletic skills. Has decent



GOOD HANDS MAN: One of Chad Johnson's biggest strengths is that he drops very few passes.

size and good build. Quicker than he is fast. Weaknesses: He is 27 and played behind Santana Moss and Reggie Wayne at Miami, so he has limited playing experience. Lacks great speed, doesn't create great separation downfield. Notable: Former outfield prospect who spent five seasons playing minor league baseball before enrolling at Miami in 1997. Bottom line: A a bit of a stretch in terms of his potential; he is as old as some seven-year NFL veterans. He would make a solid No. 4 receiver for most teams but has very little upside. Final grade: 2.4

John Capel, Florida* 5-11 173 4.31 6th round

NFL comparison: James Jett, Raiders Strengths: An Olympic track star. Probably will be the fastest player in the NFL. Has some football skills, including decent hands. Weaknesses: Lacks experience. Had just nine catches at Florida. Is undersized and might have trouble against press coverage. Needs to improve route-running skills and must learn to read and react to coverages. Notable: Competed in the 200 meters for the U.S. in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Bottom line: He's an interesting prospect. Played two years at Florida but never started. Didn't play last year because the Olympics were held in the fall. Has limited experience, but he's a burner. Final grade: 2.1

T.J. Houshmandzadeh, Oregon St. 6-1 205 4.57 6th round

NFL comparison: Albert Connell, Redskins Strengths: A playmaker with good size and quickness. Knows how to adjust to the ball in the air and has some flash as a receiver. Doesn't have great speed but shows good body control and his hands are outstanding. Weaknesses: He's more of a vertical-type receiver without great speed. Needs to learn how to run better routes. Still very raw. Has bit of an attitude problem. Notable: Caught more passes last season than teammate Chad Johnson. Bottom line: Houshmandzadeh could be the steal of the draft if he continues to develop. He got better with every game at Oregon State, and his return skills are improving as well. He's a confident player but sometimes goes too far, which is a concern. Final grade: 2.0

Margin Hooks, Brigham Young 5-101/8 182 4.52 7th round

NFL comparison: Chris Sanders, Titans Strengths: Was a productive college receiver in a passing system. Had an impressive yards-per-catch average. Has some big-play flair but is not a burner. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Is consistent. Finds the holes in coverage and attacks them. Weaknesses: Has just average measurable skills. Needs to become more physical off the line. Does not offer much as a blocker. Notable: Majored in broadcast journalism. Bottom line: A very average prospect. Has average speed, size and quickness. He makes some plays but is very limited in terms of potential. Final grade: 1.8

Richard Williams, Arizona State 5-103/4 168 4.52 7th round

NFL comparison: Dedric Ward, Jets Strengths: Has more quickness than pure speed. Has adequate hands. Catches the ball in stride, and gets good yardage after the catch. Can go deep, and is able to catch the ball underneath. Has the ability to put it in second gear. Is a smooth, fluid athlete. Weaknesses: Is very thin and not effective over the middle. Gets held up at the line. Needs to be more physical. Notable: Only TE Todd Heap caught more passes at Arizona State the past two seasons. Bottom line: Williams was 8 when he came to the U.S. from Jamaica and played only one year of high school football. Could improve with more experience, but he's nothing more than a reserve player. Final grade: 1.6

Kevin Kasper, Iowa 6-0 193 4.52 ■ 7th round

NFL comparison: Jeff Ogden, Dolphins Strengths: Has a good height/weight combination. A reliable receiver who is willing to make plays across the middle. Runs precise routes and gets good separation in the intermediate zone. Has a tremendous work ethic. Weaknesses: Doesn't have the speed to stretch defenses. Notable: Led Big Ten in receptions per game (6.8) last season. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with Kasper's playmaking ability underneath the coverage. He is a surehanded receiver who could see time in obvious passing situations as a No. 4 or 5 receiver. Final grade: 1.5

Others: Khori Ivy, West Virginia, 6-11, 189, 4.62 (40 time); Dallas Davis, Colorado State, 5-81/2, 174, 4.52; John Fitzsimmons, Connecticut, 6-21/8, 203, 4.52; Onomo Ojo, California-Davis, 6-41/s, 200, 4.62; Nathan Poole, Marshall, 6-11/2, 192, 4.65; Javon Green, Colorado, 6-11/8, 199, 4.50; Justin McCareins, Northern Illinois, 6-13/4, 200, 4.58; Richmond Flowers, Tennessee-Chattanooga, 5-11, 195, 4.52.



ICHT

OVERRATED

Arther Love, South Carolina State

He looks the part, but he just isn't a polished athlete. May be a couple years away from contributing on NFL level.

UNDERRATED

Jabari Holloway, Notre Dame

Could be a lot of untapped potential here. Irish didn't involve him in passing game as much as it should have.

SLEEPER

Brian Natkin, UTEP

Even if he's a bit undersized, you can't help but fall in love with his receiving production at the college level.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Todd Heap, Arizona State

His combination of size and receiving skills may be too much to keep him out of the first round.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Dauntae Finger, North Carolina

Never did much in college and lacks the necessary speed to stretch a defense.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-6 250 4.70 MINIMUM

6-2 240 5.00

Every NFL team is looking for the complete tight end, but very few have one. So when you find a player such as the Chiefs' Tony Gonzalez, you have a rare gem. The ideal NFL tight end is a good athlete who can stretch a defense and create mismatches in man-to-man coverage with his size and speed. However, if a tight end is a one-dimensional player, it forces offenses to be more predictable. If he is at least an adequate blocker to go along with good receiving skills, then a defense must account for him every time he lines up. The other type of tight end is a possession-type receiver—such as the Titans' Frank Wycheck who doesn't necessarily stretch a defense in the vertical passing game but knows how to get open, use his body to shield defenders from the ball and find the open seams in the defense, especially on third down. This type of tight end can have a long and productive career and is a valuable asset to an offense. Most teams will carry three tight ends on their rosters. Usually, one of them is a blocking specialist who can help in short-yardage and goal-line situations, with the other two being a combination of blocking and receiving types. If you can get all of these qualities in one player, then you probably have a Pro Bowl tight end.

his is not a real impressive group. Alge Crumpler is the closest thing to a complete tight end, and Todd Heap is a prospect with great receiving skills. After that, there's little to be excited about.

Jabari Holloway and Arther Love are probably third-round picks and both have





some upside. But we have watched extensive film on those two and-trust us-

they're not going to be factors as rookies.

This class is mostly full of players who can either catch or block but can't do both. *Denotes underclassman.

Alge Crumpler, North Carolina 6-21/4 264 4.78 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Ken Dilger, Colts

Hands: Natural and soft. Catches most everything near him. Can catch in a crowd and does nice job of securing balls thrown over his head. Good concentration. Grade: 7.3 Patterns: Shows ability to adjust against zone coverage. Uses body well to get position. Quick and athletic. Never really has been featured in passing game. Must prove he's a consistent route runner. Grade: 7.0

Blocking: Effective at the line and downfield. Has good strength and uses base well. Blocks moving targets and works to get in position. Doesn't have great size but still matches up well against bigger defenders. Sustains blocks but doesn't overpower anybody.

Release: Rarely has trouble getting off line. Powerful player with good upper-body strength. Quick enough to release against jamming linebackers. Grade: 7.0

Run after catch: Tough to bring down. A big guy with powerful running style and enough quickness to make people miss. Grade: 6.8 Notable: Father Carlester Sr., a running back at East Carolina, was a fourth-round pick of the Bills in 1974, and older brother

Carlester Jr. played with the Seahawks and Vikings.

Bottom line: The complete package. Has the strength, speed and physical skills to be exceptional at next level. Isn't as tall as some coaches like, but it's hard to ignore his other skills.

Final grade: 7.1

Todd Heap, Arizona State* 6-4% 235 4.65 2nd round

NFL comparison: Jay Riemersma, Bills Hands: Has great hands. Best receiving tight end in this class. But struggled some catching the ball last season. Team's quarterback situation was a mess, which might have affected timing. Grade: 7.5

Patterns: Almost like a wide receiver in his route-running. Runs crisp underneath routes and knows how to get down the seam. There are few NFL tight ends who run better routes. Grade: 7.6

Blocking: A big area of concern. Lacks weight and doesn't have the body right now to block NFL linebackers or ends. Knows techniques and got by in college with great quickness and positioning. Will need to add bulk and strength to be full-time player.

Grade: 5.0

Release: Might get muscled early, but he's a great athlete with a football mind. Will figure out how to get off line, using his feet, speed and hands. Grade: 6.5

Run after catch: As good as just about any NFL tight end. Has great speed for position and is comfortable running with ball.

Grade: 7.3

Notable: His mother's cousin is former Arizona State and Dallas QB Danny White. Bottom line: Extremely athletic (also played basketball in college). Feel for passing game makes him attractive to pass-oriented offenses. But questions about blocking ability could drop him into second round.

Final grade: 6.8



COMPLETE PACKAGE: Crumpler has the skills to be an exceptional tight end in the NFL.

Jabari Holloway, Notre Dame 6-25/8 255 4.80 3rd round

NFL comparison: Greg Clark, 49ers

Strengths: Played in run-oriented offense in college and has decent size and speed. Effective blocker with good quickness at the line. Good footwork allows him to stay with blocks. Strong runner after catch.

Weaknesses: Little experience as receiver. Didn't develop much because of Notre Dame's conservative system. Needs to become more physical and attack more as blocker. Notable: His father, Frank, played football at Morehouse College. Bottom line: Could go as early as third round because of upside or as late as sixth because he's unproven. With the right coaching, could become a gem. Final grade: 5.6

Arther Love, South Carolina State 6-31/8 242 4.85 3rd round

NFL comparison: Frank Wycheck, Titans

Strengths: Great athlete with all the skills. Production was limited in run-first system. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Explosive off line and gets into routes quickly. Crisp route runner with good hands. Impressive footwork. Strong run blocker. Weaknesses: Limited experience as receiver. Seemed a bit lost when he was go-to target in Senior Bowl. Needs to be more physical as blocker and probably will need to bulk up. Needs to develop drop-step technique in pass protection. Notable: Only player from a Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference school to play in Senior Bowl. Bottom line: A basketball power forward who plays tight end. Has good athletic ability, but it's mostly untapped. Ability to match up as blocker is a concern. He'll get a serious look in the midto-late rounds as a Jay Riemersma- or Frank Wycheck-type player. Final grade: 5.0

Tony Stewart, Penn State 6-4 256 4.85 4th round

NFL comparison: Tony McGee, Bengals
Strengths: Outstanding measurables. Good hands and great concentration as receiver.
Plays with good overall quickness and agility. Has tremendous body control.
Weaknesses: Just an adequate blocker.
Needs to add bulk because he has trouble sustaining blocks. Lacks the aggressiveness a blocking tight end needs. Notable: Last season, he became the first tight end to lead Penn State in receiving in 21 years. Bottom line: Has a lot of what scouts look for and could blossom with more experience and the right coaching. Should go somewhere in middle of draft. Final grade: 4.8

Brandon Manumaleuna, Arizona 6-1½ 279 4.80 4th round

NFL comparison: Jermaine Wiggins, Patriots Strengths: Surprisingly athletic for build. Massive athlete who also played defensive tackle in college. Never stops hustling, which helps make up for lack of height. Very good blocker. Has good pop at point of attack and does excellent job of maintaining blocks. Has good feel for passing game. Runs smooth routes and catches ball with hands. Takes on tacklers after the catch. Weaknesses: A bit short and doesn't make for much of a target. Will struggle as run blocker against taller ends. Notable: His father, Frank, lettered in football at UCLA in 1974. Bottom line: Has all the skills but is too short to be a great tight end. Will drop into middle-to-late rounds because of size. May have to move to H-back-or even fullback-where height issue isn't as important. Final grade: 4.3

Brian Natkin, Texas-El Paso 6-2¼ 238 4.88 4th round

NFL comparison: Aaron Shea, Browns
Strengths: Plays hard. Productive receiver.
Will catch passes underneath. Catches ball
away from body. Willing blocker. Excellent
receiver with decent speed and agility.
Weaknesses: A bit undersized. Needs to
improve footwork. Is not a deep threat but
gets down the seam. Needs to refine block-



WORTH CONSIDERATION: Hands, concentration and body control are Stewart's primary assets.

ing skills and add weight to frame. Doesn't stack up against bigger ends or outside line-backers as run blocker. Notable: UTEP's all-time pass receiving leader (172 receptions) and the school's first unanimous football All-American. Bottom line: Interesting prospect. A good receiving tight end who lacks size and power to block at NFL level. Could be moved to fullback or H-back if he improves as blocker. Final grade: 4.1

Jevaris Johnson, Georgia 6-5½ 258 4.90 5th round

NFL comparison: Jerame Tuman, Steelers Strengths: Exceptional size and good athletic ability. Fluid runner with quick feet. Smooth in and out of routes. Has feel for zone coverage. Athleticism makes up for so-so speed. Will beat linebackers in man-to-man coverage. Weaknesses: Needs to be more physical. Tends to get overwhelmed at line and pushed back too often. Needs to hit weight room. Notable: Caught only nine passes for 107 yards before injuring knee in final 2000 regular-season game. Bottom line: A solid prospect who would move up several rounds if he were stronger and more physical. Also could use attitude adjustment. Could go in fifth or sixth round because he has frame and athleticism to become a quality tight end. Final grade: 3.7

Khary Jackson, Oklahoma State 6-2½ 256 4.68 5th round

NFL comparison: David LaFleur, Cowboys
Strengths: Versatile player. Runs good routes.
Good seal blocker. Gets clean release off line
and catches ball in crowd. A good athlete
who moves well. Good size/speed combination. Finds holes underneath in passing
game. Weaknesses: Junior college transfer
with decent experience. A finesse guy who
might have trouble getting off line and hold-

ing up at point of attack as run blocker.

Notable: Transferred to Oklahoma State from Kemper Military Academy, where he earned junior college All-American honors. Bottom line: Likely will become H-back. Figures to be mid-round selection, but junior college players can rise or fall rapidly because of limited exposure. Final grade: 3.5

Bryan Blackwood, Oklahoma State 6-4% 253 4.88 5th round

NFL comparison: Hunter Goodwin, Dolphins Strengths: A big player who plays hard. Primarily a blocker in college. Limited athletic ability but decent speed. Shows good blocking technique. Has strong base and ability to hold up at point of attack. Would be good addition to a "jumbo" package. Weaknesses: Unproven receiver. Hands are decent, but he's not a downfield threat. Notable: Caught only 19 passes for 201 yards in two seasons at Oklahoma State. Bottom line: If he can prove ability to catch passes, he will be a mid- to late-round pick. Final grade: 3.2

Billy Baber, Virginia 6-3¼ 248 4.80 6th round

NFL comparison: Jeff Thomason, Eagles
Strengths: Naturally gifted pass-catching specialist with good speed. Has quick feet and good balance as blocker. Does nice job underneath as receiver and runs good routes. Finds holes in zones. Weaknesses: Doesn't have lot of experience. Needs to increase strength to provide more blocking pop. Doesn't have speed to beat linebackers on seam routes.

Notable: Played in every game of college career, including 11 as a true freshman in 1997. Bottom line: Has many decent attributes but doesn't do any one thing real well. Could contribute as receiver in two-tight end set.

Final grade: 2.7

Dauntae Finger, North Carolina 6-3% 258 4.95 6th round

NFL comparison: Rickey Dudley, Raiders Strengths: Quick off line but also can play power game. Has pop at point of attack. Finds openings underneath coverage. Likes to hit and finishes off blocks. Weaknesses: Playing behind Alge Crumpler limited his exposure. Needs to improve fundamentals. Doesn't have speed to beat linebackers on seam routes. Should be better than he is. Notable: Was a TV and radio host on campus and would like to work as a football and basketball commentator some day. Bottom line: His stock has dropped because of limited minutes in college and marginal work ethic. Has great size. Should at least be able to play blocking role in goal-line formations right away in NFL. Final grade: 2.5

Others: Antoine Harris, Southern California, 6-3%, 4.90 (40 time); Shad Meier, Kansas State, 6-4, 245, 4.85; Billy Kendall, Memphis, 6-4%, 237, 4.90; Dan O'Leary, Notre Dame, 6-4, 255, 4.85; Sean Brewer, San Jose State, 6-3%, 255, 4.84; Mike Roberg, Idaho, 6-4, 256, 4.71.



DFFENSIVE TACHL

OVERRATED

Maurice Williams, Michigan

Has a lot of natural tools and upside, but he's nowhere close to being a starting left tackle in the NFL.

UNDERRATED

Elliot Silvers, Washington

Still needs to grow into his frame but showed he could handle top competition at East-West Shrine Game.

SLEEPER

Stan Bennett, Villanova

Lacks some size and experience at high level of competition, but his consistency as blocker is hard to overlook

STOCK ON THE RISE

Brandon Winey, LSU

Came out of almost nowhere to become one of the nation's most productive blockers. The sky's the limit.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Kareem McKenzie, Penn State

As his team descended in 2000, so did McKenzie's draft status. He still could become a good player, though

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-6 325 4.95 MINIMUM 6-3½ 290 5.30

There are real differences between what scouts and coaches look for at all positions along the offensive line, starting with left tackles and right tackles. The left tackle is usually the best athlete on the line, which is important because he usually plays on the weak side without a tight end next to him and faces the opposition's best pass rusher. At the same time, he is expected to protect the blind side for a righthanded quarterback. If a left tackle does not have good range and feet, he will not be in the lineup very long, but he also must have enough power to anchor against a strong defensive end. The right tackle, meanwhile, usually is more physical and a better run blocker. He lines up against left ends, who usually are bigger and more physical than right ends. And because most offenses are righthanded, the right tackle must be a force in the run game, though he usually has the benefit of a tight end lined up next to him. Although size and power are important for a right tackle, athletic ability and good feet are just as necessary. Many teams will flex their tight ends or put them in motion, thereby putting their right tackle on an island with no outside help. And on teams that have a lefthanded quarterback (such as Jacksonville with Mark Brunell), right tackles protect the blind side. Finding an offensive tackle who has the size, strength and feet to handle any type of defensive end is very difficult in any draft year. It's a big reason these guys make the money they do.

fter extensive film study of the top offensive tackles, it's fair to say that this group is disappointing. Outside of Leonard Davis and Kenyatta Walker, who are certain first-round selections, there are eight unexciting players who project as second- or third-round picks.

Two of those prospects are from Michigan-Jeff Backus, one of the most productive offensive linemen that school has



ever produced, and Maurice Williams, a less-productive player in college but who

may have more upside as a left tackle in the NFL.

Florida State also has two prospects. Tarlos Thomas was touted as a first-round pick heading into 2000 but sprained his MCL and missed the second half of the season. Char-ron Dorsey filled in for Thomas and made the best of his opportunity.

Typically, five or six tackles are taken in the first round of every draft. That may be the case again this year, but teams will be reaching by drafting borderline first-round talent in order to fill positions of need.

*Denotes underclassman.

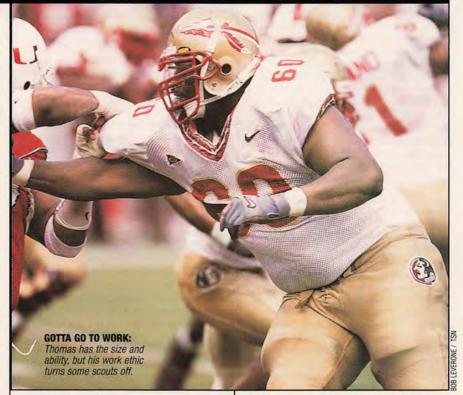
Leonard Davis, Texas 6-5% 370 5.20 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Tarik Glenn, Colts

Run blocking: Powerful player who plays with great balance. Can adjust on the move and hit the moving defender. Great mobility for man his size. Has tremendous lock-on qualities and works to whistle. Grade: 7.9

Pass blocking: Footwork is as good as it gets. Can adjust on the fly to various moves. As left tackle, will have no trouble matching up against the top NFL speed rushers. Plays with great leverage and can handle the bull rush. Grade: 7.6

Initial quickness: Burst out of his stance was slowed last season by an ankle injury. But he



made up for it with great overall quickness and power. Knows the game and takes good angles to defenders. Grade: 7.3

Strength: Could be most powerful tackle in draft. Manhandles defenders when he locks on them. Wowed scouts at combine, benchpressing 225 pounds 33 times. Grade: 7.8 Mobility: Has great feet for his size. Best attribute is ability to hit moving target. Quick enough to match up against top speed rushers. Recurring ankle problem is concern.

Grade: 7.5

Notable: Has 21 half-brothers and half-sisters. One brother, Charlie, played 10 pro seasons in the NFL (Steelers and Cardinals) and USFL.

Bottom line: The best offensive lineman in the draft-by far. Has complete package of size, power and mobility. Will be a top-10 pick, but his overall skills are not as developed as the Redskins' Chris Samuels, last year's top offensive tackle. Nonetheless, he has the right attitude, his weight is distributed better than most believe, and he has the ability to match up against just about any defensive end in the NFL.

Final grade: 7.7

Kenyatta Walker, Florida* 6-45/8 310 5.15 1st round

NFL comparison: Jon Runyan, Eagles Run blocking: Has the physical skills-size,

power and lower-body strength-to be excellent run blocker. Still has some technical work to do. Shows good initial pop and can move some but needs to work on body control, as he tends to overextend at times. Grade: 7.2

Pass blocking: Very experienced in pass pro and has the skills to play left tackle. Has good, quick feet and the ability to get to the point of attack against speed rushers. Rarely gets beat outside but will lose a battle every so often when a quick defensive end uses a double move and beats him back inside. Needs to work on lateral movement and learn how to sink his hips better in order to avoid those instances. Grade: 7.6

Initial quickness: Has good initial pop into his blocks, but should drive out of his stance more. Tends to let block come to him rather than being the aggressor. Grade: 7.2

Strength: As strong as it gets in terms of upper/lower body combination. Rarely gets knocked off feet. Lower-body strength and bulk allow him to anchor against bull rush. Grade: 7.8

Mobility: Can move a little but not great. Will rarely be asked to pull or trap but has enough speed to get downfield and make a block. Grade: 7.2

Notable: Started 31 of 36 regular-season games in three seasons at Florida.

Bottom line: Was first-rate pass blocker in pass-happy college offense. Will be best suited in that type of attack. But even if run-oriented team drafts him, he should make immediate impact.

Final grade: 7.4

Jeff Backus, Michigan 6-5% 303 5.30 2nd round

NFL comparison: John Tait, Chiefs

Run blocking: Effective but not dominating. Savvy player who knows how to use hands and body to get positioning and sustain blocks. Fires out of stance and will fight to the whistle every time. Has absolutely nasty attitude as run blocker. Grade: 7.6

Pass blocking: Has problems shifting weight and will get beat back inside once in a while. Has good strength and will battle by using hands. Don't know if he has feet or athletic ability to play left tackle. Grade: 6.3

Initial quickness: One of his strong suits. Has mastered firing out off ball, especially on running plays. Quick out of stance. Usually beats defensive end to point of attack. Grade: 7.0

Strength: A fighter with a lot of explosive power. Won't turn heads in weight room but is strong enough to hold up in every aspect of game. Grade: 7.2

Mobility: Simply not light enough on feet to project as left tackle. Will have trouble pass blocking on an island no matter which position he plays. Can pull a little bit and is not horrible in his drops but lateral movement and quickness need work. Grade: 6.3

Notable: Mother, uncle and grandfather all preceded him as Michigan graduate.

Bottom line: Stands out on film because of feel for game. Might move to right tackle in NFL because he has difficulty against quicker pass rushers. Should be a hard worker with great pride and consistency.

Final grade: 6.9

Brandon Winey, LSU 6-6 300 5.30 2nd round

NFL comparison: Korey Stringer, Vikings Run blocking: Has improved tremendously but remains too passive. Has great footwork and is always in position but not aggressive or feisty enough. Grade: 6.3

Pass blocking: Is quick on feet, knows the angles and rarely gets beat back inside. Has great size and has learned to sink hips. Only way he'll get beat is by power move, but he has enough size and quickness to compete. Grade: 7.6

Initial quickness: For a guy his size, does excellent job of getting off ball and into his block. Shows good burst and power out of stance, and rarely gets beat by a first step.

Grade: 6.7

Strength: Not a strong suit. Needs to get on big-time weight program before camp. Is too quick and too good to allow himself to get beat

over strength issues. Not overpowering at point of attack and gets knocked off his feet at times. Grade: 5.5

Mobility: Can move as well as anyone in this class. Gets out and makes blocks downfield. Has little trouble against speed rushers off the edge. His 40-vard dash time doesn't show it, but he moves well. Grade: 7.1 Notable: Three-year starter at tight end and

defensive end in high school. Bottom line: Stock continues to rise. Has the size and feet to be a good left tackle in NFL.

If he adds some bulk and strength, has potential to be solid starter for years. Final grade: 6.7

Maurice Williams, Michigan 6-5 300 5.30 2nd round

NFL comparison: Matt Lepsis, Broncos Run blocking: A work in progress as a run

blocker. Flashes a lot of talent, but consistency isn't there. Plays with good body control and leverage. Does nice job of exploding out of stance but needs to show more leg drive. Usually gets in position and makes solid pop at contact but will stop there. Grade: 6.2 Pass blocking: Has decent feet and does nice job of getting into drops. Needs to work on lateral movement. Quick enough to get by, but for some reason doesn't move well from right to left. Also needs to work on using hands better to direct traffic. Grade: 6.4 Initial quickness: Shows burst out of stancerarely beaten off snap-and gets into block. Explosive for his size, but needs to learn to sustain blocks better. Grade: 6.8

Strength: More than anything, needs to improve bulk. Is underweight for a tackle and has some trouble against bull rush. Scouting reports say to use a lot of power moves on him rather than wasting time with swim move or riding him high. Grade: 5.8 Mobility: Doesn't have great straight-line

SPOTLIGH'

Leonard Davis

No one knows just how big he really is. Big? It's all relative with Leonard Davis, Texas' massive left offensive tackle.

"We're not even sure how big," says Longhorns coach Mack Brown. "That's pretty scary, huh?"

You want big? How about 6-5%, 355 pounds? You want big but not bloated? How

about the fact that Davis had one of the lowest percentages of body fat of any player on last year's Texas team?

"I was always bigger than everyone," Davis says.

Life has always been this way for Davis, whom Texas coaches privately predict could make as big an impact in his rookie season at

tackle as any player since Tony Boselli, who was drafted second overall by the Jaguars in

When Davis hit the fifth grade, he was 6-0 and weighed 205. Two years later, he was a 6-4, 300-pound seventh-grader, Imagine encountering such a player in junior high

"Big Len-Len," "Big Monsta," "The Dancing Bear." Even one nickname hasn't been enough.

"You have to see him in person to realize just how big he is," says former Texas tailback Hodges Mitchell, who is 5-7, 190. "The best thing is, his talent matches his size.'

The only thing small about Davis is his hometown of Wortham, Texas (est. population 1,000), about 40 miles from Waco. He has 21 older half-brothers and half-sisters (his father had 11 children from a previous marriage, and his mother 10). He is the only child produced from the marriage of Sammie and L.A. Davis. whose clan accounts for just over 2 percent of the town's population.

"I'm the biggest in the family," Davis says. "By a long shot."

He also was one of the big reasons Texas clawed back from an embarrassing 63-14 loss to eventual national champion Oklahoma in midseason. After that game, Brown simplified the offense and ran Mitchell behind a line that averaged more than 300 pounds per player.

With Davis paving the way, Mitchell ran for 905 of his season-total 1,118 yards after the Oklahoma game, and the Longhorns ended their regular season with six straight victories. For Mitchell, the game plan was simple: Find Davis and stick to him.

At the very least, Mitchell could hide behind Davis, whose frame would shroud Mitchell from defenders. Now The Big Monsta is ready to make it big in the NFL. -Matt Hayes

speed but moves well enough. Has good quickness and solid footwork. Needs to improve lateral movement. Grade: 6.5 Notable: Lettered four years in volleyball in

high school

Bottom line: Has emerged from the pack because of outstanding athleticism and size. His quickness and agility allow him to handle most speed rushes, and he has shown enough strength to dominate in running game. Has tremendous upside. The only fear is a lack of experience, but productive senior year probably put all questions to rest.

Final grade: 6.4

Kareem McKenzie, Penn State 6-6 320 5.25 2nd round

NFL comparison: Willie Anderson, Bengals Run blocking: Does most things right in running game. Has good size and feet. Naturally

strong. Not real fast but can move and gets into blocks with no problems. Has explosive power and gets good initial pop. Grade: 6.9 Pass blocking: Will dominate most bull rushers and does nice job using hands. Shows good footwork and works hard at getting into set. Will struggle against top-notch edge rushers. Has trouble against quick up-and-under moves. Grade: 5.9

Initial quickness: On video. looks too lax coming out of stance. Doesn't explode out like some of the great line-

men do. Grade: 5.8 Strength: Has great size, and strength is proportioned well. Will dominate in running game if in position. Has no problem against bull rush. Grade: 6.9

Mobility: Doesn't move well from side-to-side and gets beat by a lot of quick double moves. Not sluggish and can run, but quickness issue is what hurts him. Grade: 5.5 Notable: Three-year starter who earned one All-Big Ten first-team and two All-Big Ten

second-team honors.

Bottom line: Experience is a concern. Played only two years in high school and missed significant time in '98 with ankle injury. Has tools-size, strength and natural skills-to play left tackle. But his struggles against top pass rushers last season have scouts wondering whether he can hold up on left side.

Final grade: 6.2

Marques Sullivan, Illinois 6-41/8 320 5.10 3rd round

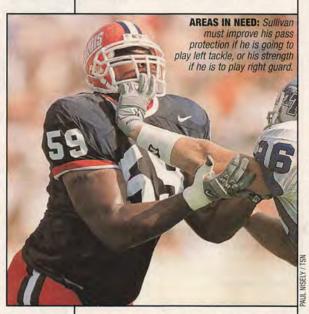
NFL comparison: Harry Swayne, Ravens Strengths: Outstanding height/weight/speed combination. Has solid athletic ability. Excellent feet. Is quick out of stance and does good job blocking moving targets. Blocks with good leverage. Has nasty streak. Weaknesses: Does not dominate in running

game. That could be a problem because he might be forced to play guard. Needs to improve pass protection to play left tackle or improve strength to play right guard.

Notable: Ended college career with 45 consecutive starts. Bottom line: An athletic big man who could sneak into second round. Will struggle at first with strength of NFL game. Final grade: 5.9

Chris Brown, Georgia Tech 6-51/4 317 5.20 3rd round

NFL comparison: William Roaf, Saints Strengths: Big and strong with great body control. Shows above-average feet. Usually gets nice set in pass protection. Has some trouble against speed rushers but dominates if he locks on them. Rarely leaves feet. Weaknesses: Injuries are big concern; he missed time with corrective shoulder and



wrist surgeries. Needs to play with more intensity and consistency. Movement could improve. Will struggle against speed-rush ends. Notable: Did not play football until junior year of high school; instead, played tuba in school band. Bottom line: Decent athlete with rare combination of size and strength, but scouts wonder about his ability to play tackle. A mauler in the run game, he struggles against speed rushers. Figures to end up at right tackle or guard in NFL. Final grade: 5.8

Jarvis Borum, NC State 6-6% 339 5.16 3rd round

NFL comparison: Adam Meadows, Colts Strengths: Outstanding size and good quickness. Engulfs players when he gets into their bodies. Is quick to set up in pass protection and adjusts well to stunts. Quick off ball and has good initial pop. More a mauler than a finesse guy. Weaknesses: Tends to play too high and loses leverage. Improved feet tremendously from year ago but still gets beat by good double moves. Notable:

Strongest player on Wolfpack last season; nicknamed "Big Earth." Bottom line: His outstanding size, and potential will lead to an early selection. You can't teach his measurables and he continues to improve, which shows he has an upside and is coachable. A good pick in third round, because he's worth the developmental process. Final grade: 5.6

Tarlos Thomas, Florida State* 6-5% 349 5.28 3rd round

NFL comparison: John Jackson, Bengals Strengths: Massive, with good athletic ability. Shows nice feet and overall quickness. Immovable in pass protection and will dominate one-on-one matchups in running game. Weaknesses: Needs to play with more intensity, especially late in games. Doesn't show necessary burst out of stance. Needs to be more consistent. Notable: Legally changed his last name from Crumtrie to Thomas before 1997 season. Bottom line: Has all the skills but lacks intangibles. Has exceptional size and natural ability but has never worked hard enough. Must bounce back from knee injury that cost him the second half of senior season. By drafting him, you would be betting on his work ethic, which may not be a good bet. Final grade: 5.4

Char-ron Dorsey, Florida State 6-51/2 353 5.35 3rd round

NFL comparison: Aaron Gibson, Lions Strengths: Is tough. Suffered what was thought to be a season-ending injury in preseason of '98 but returned in early October. Plays with passion and works at the game. Big, strong and physical. Can engulf ends in both running and passing games.

Weaknesses: Doesn't carry weight well and doesn't move as well as most guys at the position. Would get killed right now by some of the NFL's faster pass rushers. Notable: Played in six games as true freshman at defensive tackle before moving to offensive tackle, where his transition was slowed by neck injuries. Bottom line: Athletic ability and overall potential have led to rise in stock. A bit of an enigma. Was used only in backup role in '99. But his eye-opening talent and improved ability to move with quicker ends has led to his emergence. Has limited experience and looks top-heavy, but you can't ignore his size and potential if given more coaching. Final grade: 5.1

Elliot Silvers, Washington 6-63/4 304 5.21 4th round

NFL comparison: L.J. Shelton, Cardinals Strengths: Size, quickness and game experience. A crafty guy who knows how to use hands to grab and take solid angles. Has huge frame. Moves better than most people think. Weaknesses: Needs to hit the weight room and add bulk. Needs to use legs for better leverage. Has trouble with opponents who get low on him and drive. Notable: Attended same high school as Vikings left tackle Todd Steussie. Bottom line: Might be worth taking a shot on late in third round. Has the height

and a frame to grow. Is relatively sound in terms of technique. If a team has the time to coach him and let him grow, he's a pretty good long-term prospect. Final grade: 4.8

Jonas Jennings, Georgia 6-4 310 5.30 4th round

NFL comparison: Dave Fiore, 49ers Strengths: Has decent size and adequate athletic ability. Shows good body control. Has great upper-body strength and enough lowerbody strength to hold up against bull rushes. Moves well on the line of scrimmage.

Weaknesses: Loses leverage because he tends to play too high. Has some trouble when asked to get out and chip linebackers. Notable: Played center, guard and tackle at Georgia. Bottom line: Appears to be a mid-round pick but could move up if he improves his strength before draft day. Final grade: 4.6

Mathias Nkwenti, Temple 6-3% 279 4.87 4th round

NFL comparison: John Fina, Bills

Strengths: Has tremendous power and speed. Has the frame to add bulk and is maniac in weight room. Is good athlete who can move his feet. Makes up for lack of bulk with exceptional upper-body strength. Weaknesses: Lack of bulk and overall size is concern. Is raw. Type of player who will need at least a year before stepping on the field. Notable: Born in Younda, Cameroon, Africa; father is diplomatic representative of Cameroon assigned to the U.S. Bottom line: Continues to climb up draft boards because of pure athleticism and strength. Is undersized and has limited experience, but footwork and quickness make him an interesting prospect. Final grade: 4.5

Kenyatta Jones, South Florida 6-31/4 316 5.11 4th round

NFL comparison: Matt Stinchcomb, Raiders Strengths: Has impressive combination of size and speed. A fluid athlete who has the quickness to play left tackle. Gets off ball with burst and does nice job of establishing contact with opponent. Very strong. Weaknesses: Dominated undersized competition in college. Appeared to be lazy at times, perhaps because of subpar competition. Will need to improve intensity and toughness. Must improve use of hands in pass protection. Notable: Godfather is former NFL running back John L. Williams. Bottom line: Weak college opposition both hurts and helps him. Some scouts see him as an unheralded player with limitless upside. Others see an underachiever who dominated in college because of inferior competition. Still, he's a versatile athlete whose size and speed should result in him being a mid-round pick. Final grade: 4.2

Ryan Diem, Northern Illinois 6-6% 334 5.08 4th round

NFL comparison: Fred Miller, Titans Strengths: Has rare height/weight/speed combination. Is better run blocker than pass blocker. Dominates when he locks on opponents. Weaknesses: Undeveloped as a player

and a bit stiff in his movement. Tends to wear down late in games. Has some trouble with the angles he takes on defenders. Struggles to get to point of attack against opponents who play with leverage. Not ready to compete at NFL level; needs time to learn how to handle his size better. Notable: CoSIDA Academic All-District honoree with 3.23 cumulative GPA in mechanical engineering. Bottom line: Looks like a mid- to late-round pick because of massive size and good strength. Probably will be right tackle because he lacks mobility to play on an island against speed rushers. Final grade: 3.7

Shawn Draper, Alabama 6-4 294 5.00 5th round

NFL comparison: Brent Smith, Dolphins Strengths: Is strong and plays physical, which make him a run-blocking force. Moves well and will get out and hit somebody. Also has played tight end and defensive end, which is why he has good movement. Weaknesses: Lacks some bulk and has some trouble with big, physical defensive linemen. Lacks experience and is still adjusting to new position. Needs lots of work on technique and angles. Notable: All-city basketball player in junior and senior years of high school in Huntsville, Ala. Bottom line: Will need to improve technique and overall body mass in order to hold up at NFL level. Final grade: 3.4

Stan Bennett, Villanova 6-5 296 5.10 6th round

NFL comparison: Brad Hopkins, Titans Strengths: Has lots of playing experience-but at I-AA level. A solid pass blocker but better in running game. Not dominating, but knows angles, uses hands and has wide wing span. Almost always plays under control, with great leverage and balance. Weaknesses: Will need to add some weight, because he's destined to play right tackle. Has the frame to grow, but the bulk isn't there yet. Has some trouble in pass protection; needs to become better moving laterally. Notable: Started 13 games at guard as true freshman in 1997. Bottom line: Worth the pick if still around in sixth round. Has great frame and shows the strength to dominate in running game. A right tackle prospect, he could be a diamond in the rough if he adds weight proportionately. Final grade: 2.9

Matthew Wilson, West Virginia 6-3% 286 5.25 6th round

NFL comparison: Lomas Brown, Giants Strengths: Showed constant improvement in college. Takes great angles and uses sound tactics to ward off defenders. Has good lateral quickness; can pass block on edge. Weaknesses: Lacks strength. Tends to get overwhelmed at point of attack by bigger defensive ends. Has trouble getting good leverage; looks stiff on tape. Notable: Standout on high school track (shot put and discus) and wrestling teams. Bottom line: Heady player with so-so athleticism. Continued improvement in college intrigues scouts and coaches.

Very coachable. Awkward movement and lim-

ited quickness could hurt status. Solid play in 2000 has him slated as late-round prospect. Final grade: 2.7

Kynan Forney, Hawaii 6-3 300 5.15 6th round

NFL comparison: Michael Thompson, Falcons Strengths: Nice quickness and mobility. Plays smart. Elevates play of those around him. Weaknesses: Is undersized and tends to get bowled over at point of attack. Limited strength hurts ability to sustain blocks and drive opponents downfield. Seems to have reached potential. Still is barely above average. Notable: Threw discus and shot put for high school track team. Bottom line: Had solid 2000 season and, as a result, rose on several draft boards. But he lacks the bulk to match up right now and must become a better overall run blocker, because he's destined to play right tackle. Final grade: 2.5

Kendrick Rogers, Alabama A&M 6-51/8 291 5.16 7th round

NFL comparison: Roger Chanoine, Browns Strengths: A physical specimen with great size and strength. Moves well for big man; has extremely quick feet. Has all the physical skills to become a good player in the NFL. Weaknesses: Just doesn't know the game and is constantly making mistakes. Technique is poor and takes lousy pursuit angles. Needs to do better job of picking up blitz and knowing when to help out inside. Notable: Moved from defensive line to offensive line in 1998; allowed only three sacks in three seasons as offensive tackle. Bottom line: Raw but has size and speed to play in NFL. Simply needs to learn his position and the technique. Worth a seventh-round pick if you have time to wait for him to develop. Final grade: 1.7

Damion Cook, Bethune-Cookman 6-41/8 316 5.38 7th round

NFL comparison: Grant Williams, Patriots Strengths: Massive guy with impressive natural strength. Can be dominant in running game if he gets into position. Rarely pushed off feet and does nice job of using upperbody strength to direct traffic. Weaknesses: Isn't ready yet from football standpoint. Looks sloppy on field. Doesn't move real well and is still learning the game. Notable: Both of his parents also graduated from Bethune-Cookman. Bottom line: Definition of raw prospect. Has size and great strength but still has to grow into his body. Doesn't have great experience and played at low level in college. Bounced back and forth from defensive tackle to offensive tackle. Will need time on practice squad to develop. Final grade: 1.4

Others: Tom Ashworth, Colorado, 6-55/8, 281, 5.15 (40 time); Javiar Collins, Northwestern, 6-61/8, 311, 5.15; Decorye Hampton, Memphis, 6-63/8, 340, 5.36; Dennis Norman, Princeton, 6-37/s, 286, 5.15; Tait Afualo, Texas A&M-Commerce, 6-51/8, 295, 5.35; Scot Harper, Marshall, 6-5, 281, 5.28; David Pruce, Buffalo, 6-75/8, 286, 5.23.



SUARD!

OVERRATED

Chad Ward, Washington

We have him No. 2 at the position, but his slow feet and tendency to gain weight could hurt his production.

UNDERRATED

Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack, Mississippi State The lifelong rope-jumper could surprise some people next season with his feet.

SLEEPER

Louis Williams, LSU

A college left tackle, he could develop into quite a mobile guard in the NFL.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Omar Smith, Kentucky

His improvement from his junior to senior year was remarkable, and he was even better at the Senior Bowl.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Mike Gandy, Notre Dame

Works hard but isn't overly talented. And he was injured quite a bit in college.

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with raw power, you have the makings of a Pro Bowl player.

The guard position has changed dramatically over the past few years as NFL offenses have changed their philosophy. Very few teams ask for a lot of movement from their guards anymore. The days of the old Steelers and 49ers offensive lines, which put a premium on pulling, trapping and movement, are long gone. With the emphasis today on size and speed instead of athletic ability and feet, the smaller, quicker guards of yesteryear have been replaced by big, physical men who can move a pile. The reason is simple. With most NFL defenses playing a 4-3 front, the defensive tackles typically are "earth-mover" types who try to collapse the pocket (Baltimore's Tony Siragusa and Sam Adams, for example), freeing the linebackers to make tackles. As a result, offenses have had to adjust to bigger, stronger guards to match up physically. However, this doesn't mean that only big, slow-moving lugs need apply for jobs as NFL guards. Teams always are on the lookout for big guys who have the feet and movement to get out on linebackers, to angle block, and to be at least adequate in pass protection. There is a misnomer in NFL circles that all you require of a guard is to be big and physical and have marginal athletic ability. There are a lot of guards like that in the NFL, but when you have movement skills to go along

he guard position definitely is a strong point of the draft. It's rare to see so many good players at this position, because some of the best guards usually start out as tackles and are moved to guard.

This year, however, there are a lot of natural guards who could step in and play right away in the NFL. At the top of the list are Michigan's Steve Hutchinson and Washington's Chad Ward, both four-year



starters. After Hutchinson

and Ward, players such as Omar Smith,

Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack, Paul Zukauskas and Mike Gandy are legitimate prospects for the first day of the draft. Unfortunately for them, they play a position that often gets overlooked on draft day, as teams feel it is more important to address the tackle and center positions before using a high pick on a guard. It will be interesting to see if teams elect to pass over a better player at guard to take a lesser prospect at tackle or center.

Steve Hutchinson, Michigan 6-4% 305 5.20 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Mark Schlereth, Broncos Run blocking: Physical, feisty run blocker with good strength at point of attack. Gets good explosion off the snap and shows tremendous initial pop. Will sustain his blocks with good leg drive. Moves well, can pull and trap. Grade: 7.5

Pass blocking: Does a lot of technical things right to get by in pass protection but doesn't necessarily have great skills. Has lowerbody strength to anchor and uses his hands to create positioning. Can shuffle and slide but struggles if left on the edge.

Initial quickness: Fires out very well. Shows burst and explosion out of stance and usually gets a leg up on defender by beating him to the spot. Grade: 7.7

Strength: Not a mauler but has more than enough strength to be dominant in the NFL. Will use all means necessary to get the job done. Grade: 6.7 Mobility: Doesn't have great straightline speed. More quick than fast. Will work to get downfield and is mobile enough to get in position as a pulling guard. Grade: 6.7

Notable: Only fourth player in Big Ten history to be named first-team allleague four times.

Bottom line: Hutchinson was as consistent as any interior blocker in the past decade at the college level. He has tremendous knowledge of his craft. He is certain to be one of the top guards taken.

Final grade: 7.0

Chad Ward, Washington 6-41/2 339 5.09 2nd round

NFL comparison: Ruben Brown, Bills Run blocking: Massive, thick run blocker with great power and leverage in the running game. Can push people around with explosive strength. Grade: 6.4

Pass blocking: Has some trouble in this area. Shows good footwork and can block on the move but has trouble with speed rushes when forced to block one-on-one. Will have trouble with quick defensive tackles. Grade: 6.0

Initial quickness: Has surprising quickness, especially out of his stance. His ability to take good angles makes up for some of his lack of agility. Grade: 6.0

Strength: One of the strongest prospects in the entire draft. Wins most battles on strength alone. Grade: 6.7

Mobility: Has surprising straight-line speed. Gets around well but needs to work on his agility-mostly in pass protection. Grade: 5.6 Notable: Won a district shot put championship in high school and also was a fouryear starter in basketball.

Bottom line: One of the top guard prospects



IT'S OVER: When Zukauskas is able to lock on to his opponent, he usually wins.

because of his power, strength and explosiveness in the running game. Has played some right tackle but clearly is better suited to play guard.

Final grade: 6.1

Omar Smith, Kentucky 6-2 291 5.10 3rd round

NFL comparison: Will Shields, Chiefs

Strengths: Has outstanding athletic ability. Uses his quick feet to get in good position. An explosive blocker with good strength and burst out of his stance. Strong and tough enough to hold up against bull rushes. Rarely gets beat by speed rushers.

Weaknesses: Needs to add some bulk and lower-body strength to be more effective in running game. Sometimes plays with insufficient leverage. Notable: Graduated in May

2000 with a degree in social work. **Bottom** line: Smith improved rapidly at right tackle the past two seasons, but the feeling in NFL circles is he is better suited at guard, where his mobility and versatility would be better served. **Final grade: 5.7**

Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack, Miss. State 6-3½ 332 5.35 3rd round

NFL comparison: Mo Collins, Raiders Strengths: Has developed better feet than initially anticipated. Dedicated to jump-rope regimen and has been working on his foot quickness since he was 8. A wide body played tackle in college but would be a much better guard. Weaknesses: He's still a bit sloppy, especially in pass protection. Tends to bend at the waist too much and doesn't play with enough leverage in pass protection. He gets top heavy at times, so weight control is a concern. Notable: Nickname given to him by his mother, who believed he looked like a local wrestler named Pork Chop Cash. Bottom line: Womack is a massive player who projects as a better guard than tackle. Could be dominant at the position, especially as run blocker. Final grade: 5.6

Paul Zukauskas, Boston College 6-5¼ 308 5.28 3rd round NFL comparison: Chris Naeole, Saints

Strengths: Extremely strong and powerful. Has a great body and build for the position. Shows good lock-on qualities. Tough to beat when in position. A steady player who is extremely strong at point of attack. Weaknesses: Has trouble in pass protection because of limited agility. Tends to get beat off the ball by quicker defensive tackles. Needs to improve quickness and angles in order to start in NFL. Notable: In 1997, became first true freshman to start on a Boston College offensive line. Bottom line: Zukauskas looks like a right tackle but will be forced to play guard because of his inability to block quick ends one-on-one. A mauler in the running game, he will be drafted as high as the third round because of his ability to move the pile. Final grade: 5.3

6-4% 313 5.18

Mike Gandy, Notre Dame
6-4% 1313 5.18

NFL comparison: Matt O'Dwyer, Bengals Strengths: Has a good body type for the position. Smart player. Shows good quickness off the ball and usually gets good positioning. Reacts well to stunts and blitzes. Is very aggressive. Best trait might be way he works to finish every play. Weaknesses: Doesn't have much game experience because of injuries. Needs to improve on technique. Needs to show more pop at the point of attack in the running game. Notable: Cousin Tony Blevins played football at Kansas. Bottom line: An aggressive, intelligent guard who plays game the way it's supposed to be played. Doesn't have great quickness or strength but is adequate in both areas. Gets by on brains and hard work. Final grade: 4.8

Matt Light, Purdue 6-4% 301 5.20 4th round

NFL comparison: Adam Timmerman, Rams
Strengths: Good size and solid build. Works to
get in position. Went to Purdue as tight end,
so he has good feet and natural athleticism for
the position. Played tackle in college, but
grades out much better at guard. Has nice
leverage and body control. Strong enough to
hold up one-on-one. Weaknesses: Not
explosive or overpowering and might
have some trouble early in career

explosive or overpowering and might have some trouble early in career against bigger, more physical defensive tackles. Notable: Started game at tight end as true freshman in 1996. Bottom line: Tenacious blocker with good feet and instincts. One area he needs to improve is run blocking; he is mostly untested and might be undersized. A mid-round prospect with big upside. Final grade: 4.4

Michael Keathley, Texas Christian 6-31/4 296 5.01 4th round

NFL comparison: Randy Thomas, Jets Strengths: A tackle in college, he has shown the feet and quickness to be a very mobile NFL guard. He has the feet, balance and toughness to play inside. He is also a very smart player who picks up the blitz well and rarely blows an assignment. Weaknesses: Lacks great size, so he might get pushed around too much in one-on-one situations vs. NFL defensive tackles. Notable: Moved from tight end to offensive tackle midway through freshman year. Bottom line: He's a bit undersized, but he has the frame to grow and the quickness to be a very mobile guard. If he can get his weight and strength up, he could start in the NFL. Final grade: 4.2

Russ Hochstein, Nebraska 6-3% 288 5.21 4th round

NFL comparison: Kevin Donnalley, Dolphins Strengths: Typical Nebraska lineman-smart, durable and reliable. Aggressive approach makes up for lack of athletic ability. Shows remarkable technique. Takes good angles against faster defenders. Weaknesses: Undersized. Doesn't show great coordination and will get pushed off his feet. Struggles in pass protection because of rigid movement. Notable: Had a school record-tying 23 "pancake blocks," against Notre Dame last season. Bottom line: Has a great work ethic and shows real dedication in the film room. Overall, an average player at the position who will be taken somewhere in the middle of the draft. Final grade: 4.0

Bernard Robertson, Tulane 6-2% 297 4.99 5th round

NFL comparison: Max Lane, Patriots
Strengths: Has a rare combination of speed and quickness. Shows great ability to recognize and adjust to-blitzes. Moves well along line with great balance. Knows how to pass protect. Weaknesses: Does not punish defenders. Needs to play with more intensity. Might be a bit undersized. Notable: Four-year starter who did not allow a sack or QB pres-

SPOTLIGH1

Steve Hutchinson

Michigan guard Steve Hutchinson spent the last four seasons trashing the notion that only defensive players can be aggressive.

Time and again, Hutchinson drove defenders into the ground on the way to becoming just the second Wolverine to earn first-team

All-Big Ten honors four years in a row. That disposition makes the 6-45%, 305-pound Hutchinson a hot commodity.

He's a ferocious drive blocker who is notorious for playing until the whistle blows. Often, he'll go a little longer to emphasize his point. What better way to show a foe who's

boss? Hutchinson couples that fire and intensity with strength and toughness. Although speed isn't one of his assets, Hutchinson has enough quickness and explosion to reach linebackers and bounce outside to help pick up a pass rusher.

Hutchinson started alongside tackle Jeff Backus (6-5%, 303), another prime NFL prospect, for four seasons, giving Michigan one of the most formidable offensive line tandems in the nation.

"They're team guys," Michigan coach Lloyd Carr says. "They're guys who don't care about who gets the credit. They take great pride in the way they perform. From the day those two guys came in here, you knew eventually they were both going to be successful."

Hutchinson, who roomed with Backus, arrived in Ann Arbor as a defensive lineman. After redshirting in 1996, he switched to offense. Despite the move, Hutchinson didn't lose his defensive mentality.

As a redshirt freshman in 1997, Hutchinson helped lead the Wolverines to a share of the national championship, Michigan's first since 1948. He leaves as part of the only senior class at Michigan to win four bowls in a row.

"I look back at '97 as a special thing," he says. "We're always going to remember that. I'll remember coming back the next year and winning the Big Ten championship. I've got a lot of good memories from here."

After an uneven performance by Michigan's ground game in 1999, Hutchinson helped the Wolverines rank third in the Big Ten last year with an average of 220 yards per game. That total was the team's best rushing average since 1992, when Michigan ran for 268 yards per game.

During the past four seasons, Hutchinson served as a chief escort for Anthony Thomas, who become the school's all-time leading rusher last year. —Tom Dienhart

sure last season. Bottom line: Robertson played tackle in college, but he's more of a finesse blocker who would not hold up on the outside by himself in the NFL. He'll need to improve his upper-body strength to survive inside. Final grade: 3.8

Bill Ferrario, Wisconsin 6-21/4 308 5.28 5th round

NFL comparison: Jim Pyne, Browns

Strengths: Hard-nosed guy who plays each down with urgency. Solid run blocker who moves the pile on initial contact. Shows good flexibility and agility. Sets up quickly in pass protection. Weaknesses: Has average speed and quickness. Lack of height is a concern. Could be a college overachiever who lacks great NFL tools. Notable: Fouryear starter who opened holes for a 1,000yard running back every season. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with his toughness and work ethic. Will be a mid- to lateround pick on his blue-collar attitude alone. Doesn't have great physical skills but grades out extremely well. Final grade: 3.5

Louis Williams, LSU 6-41/4 289 5.40 5th round

NFL comparison: Corbin Lacina, Vikings Strengths: Has advantage at the point of attack because of nice size and good strength. Very durable player with toughness. Committed to getting better. Smart guy who doesn't make mental mistakes. Topnotch run blocker. Weaknesses: Not very agile and plays a bit stiff; rigid movement hurts his ability to pass protect. Needs to improve his leverage; won't be able to rely so much on strength once he gets to the NFL. Notable: Allowed no sacks in last two seasons at his Florida Class 6A high school. Bottom line: Williams played left tackle for three years at LSU before being moved to guard in 2000, so he has a lot of room for growth. However, he doesn't appear to have quickness NFL scouts look for in a guard. But he's a good value for the fifth or sixth round. Final grade: 3.4

Scott Kempenich, Oklahoma 6-5 315 5.15 5th round

NFL comparison: Mike Flynn, Ravens Strengths: Shows dedication to the game. A team player who elevates the performance of those around him. Quickly rising up draft boards because of late-season performances. Has great size and still moves well. Weaknesses: Injury prone. Spent the majority of his college career battling injuries. Those injuries have led to loss of quickness. Doesn't have speed to pull and trap. Notable: Moved from tackle to guard in 1999 to put less stress on an injured right foot. Bottom line: Has smarts and desire, but health history and average athleticism relegate him to the latter rounds. Final grade: 3.2

Chris Valletta, Texas A&M 6-2% 302 5.24 6th round NFL comparison: Rich Tylski, Steelers



MOVIN' UP: Leyva's stock has risen because of his size and quickness, but his athleticism is a concern.

Strengths: Aggressive player with good footwork, balance and quickness. Does nice job getting in position and takes good angles to defenders. Uses his hands well to hold off rushers. Agile athlete. At his best when blocking on the move or helping out. Could be moved to center. Weaknesses: Has some trouble holding his ground against bull rushes in pass protection. Notable: Hosts his own radio show in College Station, Texas. Bottom line: Durable guy who didn't miss a game in college. He's a bit limited by his tools, but knowledge of position and work ethic will make him a fifth- or sixth-round pick. Final grade: 2.9

Chukky Okobi, Purdue 6-01/2 318 5.10 6th round

NFL comparison: Ross Verba, Packers Strengths: Very athletic. Comes off the ball extremely hard and is effective in shortyardage situations. Has quickness to sprint past defensive tackles and reach linebackers. Can jam defenders at the line. Tough player. Weaknesses: A bit short. Has to improve his strength; tends to get bowled over at the point of attack. Notable: Given name is Chukwunweze Sonume Okobi. Bottom line: Okobi is versatile; he played guard and center in college. His quick burst and initial pop will help make him a fifth- or sixth-round selection. Final grade: 2.6

Victor Leyva, Arizona State 6-31/2 305 5.35 6th round

NFL comparison: Steve McKinney, Colts Strengths: Solid combination of size, quickness, toughness and great work ethic. Versatile; can play guard or tackle. Moving up draft boards everywhere. Weaknesses: Has limited strength for interior lineman and below-average athletic ability. Notable: Named to All-Pacific-10 first team last year. Bottom line: Tough player to figure out. His impressive lower-body strength and burst could lead to a surprising early selection. At

same time, limited athleticism could hurt his standing. Final grade: 2.4

Adam Haayer, Minnesota 6-5% 296 5.25 6th round

NFL comparison: Zach Wiegert, Jaquars Strengths: Good size and strength. Continues to improve. Has a lot of natural tools. Fundamentally sound and smart player. Moves extremely well for an interior player. Weaknesses: His toughness is a question. Doesn't finish blocks well and doesn't play with the aggressiveness or confidence it takes to make it as an interior blocker in the NFL. Notable: Three-time allconference basketball player in high school. Bottom line: Has the tools to make an NFL roster if he shows more toughness. Likely will begin his career on a practice squad or as a deep reserve. Final grade: 2.1

Siitupe Peko, Michigan State 6-3% 301 5.34 7th round

NFL comparison: Phil Ostrowski, 49ers Strengths: Smart player who wins battles by taking good angles and knowing his opponent. Also gets by on quick feet and movement. Really doesn't have great tools but plays at a high level. Weaknesses: Undersized. Has only adequate athletic ability. Mechanics are developing. Not as big or dominating as you would like. Notable: Broke his ankle in a surf-boarding accident in 1997. Bottom line: If drafted at all, he will go in the last round because he doesn't have the all-around tools. Could develop into an NFL player after a stint on the practice squad. Final grade: 1.8

Ray Redziniak, Illinois 6-2% 294 5.18 7th round

NFL comparison: Joe Andruzzi, Patriots Strengths: Has great feel for the position. Usually sends defenders backward on initial contact. Shows good footwork and balance. Excellent blocker on short pulling plays. Weaknesses: Lacks ideal size and tools. Doesn't have great speed and struggles in open field as run blocker. Usually needs help in pass protection. Purely an inside blocker who is a liability on the edge. Notable: Lettered three times in football, three times in wrestling and twice in lacrosse in high school. Bottom line: Redziniak gets the job done with work ethic and nastiness. Has developed into technically sound and powerful player. Doesn't have tools to be great player but will give 100 percent on every play. Final grade: 1.5

Others: Dave Costa, Wisconsin, 6-5³/₄, 308, 5.28 (40 time); Will Cuthbert, Alabama, 6-4, 329, 5.30; Trey Langley, LSU, 6-41/8, 292, 5.18; Albert Traylor, Northwestern State (La.), 6-23/8, 306, 5.30; Alex Sulfsted, Miami (Ohio), 6-4, 311, 5.28; Tim Stuber, Colorado State, 6-45/8, 315, 5.64; Josh Lind, Oklahoma State, 6-57/8, 294, 5.03; Brent McCaffrey, Southern Cal, 6-4, 285, 5.20.

ENTE

OVERRATED

Ben Hamilton, Minnesota

His size and skill limitations are being overshadowed by his college production.

UNDERRATED

Bruce Wiggins, Arizona

An impressive showing at the East-West Shrine Game could earn him a late-round call.

SLEEPER

Robert Garza, Texas A&M-Kingsville

The Division II product proved he could hang with the big boys at the Senior Bowl.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Matt Lehr, Virginia Tech

Despite his limited athleticism, his college production has teams talking him up as a possible fifth-rounder.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Casey Rabach, Wisconsin

He could fall to the third round because of a lack of strength and quickness.

OPTIMUM 6-4 300 5.00 MINIMUM 6-1½ 280 5.30

Ht. Wt. 40

Center might be the most underrated position on the offensive line in regard to importance. With the exception of left tackle, center is the toughest offensive line position to play in today's game. With most NFL teams playing a 4-3 defensive scheme, centers often don't have anybody lined up directly across from them. They must have enough quickness and athletic ability to reach a linebacker and have the feet and balance to be proficient in space. They also need the range to help out in pass protection, and in some line schemes, centers might be asked to "chip" all the way out on an outside pass rusher. Though athletic ability and movement are certainly critical, today's center also must have enough size and strength to anchor at the point of attack. That's because he will be lined up at times against a big defensive tackle in a 3-4 defense or a 4-3 scheme that is offset. If a center does not have the power to play at the point of attack, you can bet that defenses will put a big, strong tackle on his nose to disrupt the inside running game. Another attribute that is necessary to play center is football intelligence. In many line schemes, centers are asked to make all the line calls and read defenses. They need to anticipate and recognize defensive strategy, react quickly, make adjustments and help out their fellow linemen. As you might expect, it is difficult to get all of these qualities in one player.

his is a top-heavy group, with three players who could be drafted in the first three rounds. It's rare for the center position to have that type of impact high in the draft. There were only three centers selected in the entire '99 draft, and only five were drafted last year.

Dominic Raiola's decision to leave Nebraska early was the right one, as he is likely to be drafted in the first two rounds. It



shows the type of talent he really has, as very few offensive linemen declare for the

draft before their college eligibility has expired, let alone a center.

Casey Rabach and Ben Hamilton are sound players who warrant a serious look on the first day, but after that, the level of talent drops off significantly.

Dominic Raiola, Nebraska* 6-2 301 5.12 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Tom Nalen, Broncos Run blocking: An absolute mauler in the running game. Has quick initial step. Shows great strength, moves the pile and finishes once he locks on. Has mobility and agility. Overall, a very sound blocker. Grade: 7.6 Pass blocking: Not as proven as you would like-after all, he's a product of a run-oriented offense. Still, he has great strength at point of attack. Can anchor against bull rush. His feet are sound and he can shuffle from side-to-side. Area he needs to work on is blitz recognition. Grade: 6.9

Initial quickness: Shows an outstanding first step. Has worked to get out of stance more quickly. Knows his angles and usually wins battles with anticipation. Grade: 7.3

Strength: Has brute strength. Plays with leverage and uses lower body to anchor against rush. Difficult to move around. Grade: 7.1 Mobility: Good but not great. Feet are quick, but he's not a great runner. Should be faster than he is. Works to get downfield and contribute, but he's not going to beat anyone in a race. Quicker than fast. Grade: 6.8 Notable: Nebraska's first scholarship football

player from Hawaii.

Bottom line: Leader with good football knowledge and a lot of very good physical tools. Should be starter in NFL from day one and remain a starter for next 10 years.

Final grade: 7.2

Casey Rabach, Wisconsin 6-4% 296 5.20 2nd round

NFL comparison: Jeff Christy, Buccaneers Run blocking: Efficient and gets in great position. Lacks great strength but plays with enough leverage to get job done. Aggressive and tough. Grade: 6.8

Pass blocking: Outstanding picking up blitz. Has real feel for pass protection and good lateral movement. Doesn't have great power but uses his hands well and holds his own when bull-rushed. Grade: 6.9

Initial quickness: Gets out of his stance and has good quickness but can be beat when playing head up on a nose tackle. Definitely needs improvement in this area. Grade: 5.5 Strength: Not a strength guy. Gets the job done with grit and intensity. Grade: 5.2 Mobility: Decent athlete with good-enough quickness to get by in NFL. Gets to linebackers quickly but lacks great speed. Grade: 6.0 Notable: Consensus first-team All-Big Ten pick last season.

Bottom line: Great size and experience. Lacks dominating strength but is physical, intense and intelligent. Type of player who could sneak into second round because of consistent productivity.

Final grade: 6.1

Ben Hamilton, Minnesota 6-45/8 303 5.32 3rd round

NFL comparison: Kevin Mawae, Jets Strengths: Intelligent player with all the intangibles. Leader by example. Plays with great intensity and confidence. Has great



HEADY PLAYER: Hamilton, a cerebral-type player in college, needs to add a bit more brawn.

frame and gets in excellent position. Takes right angles to point of attack. Weaknesses: Needs to get stronger. Too much of a finesse guy. Will not overpower defenders at point of attack and will get pushed around by physical defensive tackles who line head up on him. Notable: Four-time member of Big Ten's All-Academic Team. Bottom line: Overcomes size and skill limitations with determination and football know-how. Coach's dream in terms of work ethic, mental capacity and approach to the game. Will be drafted higher than his physical skills would seem to call for simply because he knows the nuances of his position. Final grade: 5.0

Robert Garza, Texas A&M-Kingsville 6-2 292 5.03 5th round

NFL comparison: Jeff Mitchell, Ravens Strengths: Active and athletic player. Shows

good initial burst out of his stance. More of a finesse player. Wins most matchups by taking correct angles to defender and using great technique. Has very good intangibles. Weaknesses: Needs to add some bulk and play with more consistency. Lacks explosive strength. Not as aggressive as you would like. Notable: Won Division II national championship in indoor and outdoor shot put last year. Bottom line: Tremendous competitor and great athlete with leadership ability. Has trouble when matched up against big nose tackles. Makes up for some of his limitations with great upper-body strength. Figures to be a fine NFL backup. Final grade: 3.7

Bruce Wiggins, Arizona 6-21/2 281 5.10 6th round

NFL comparison: Dave Wohlabaugh, Browns Strengths: Great footwork, balance and lateral movement. Has good technique. Uses hands well. Good upper-body strength. Stays low on blocks. Does a good job of maintaining leverage. Has the quickness and athletic ability to get out and block linebackers. Weaknesses: Lack of size and bulk are big concerns. Also needs to do a better job of picking up the blitz. Notable: Had a streak of 28 consecutive starts snapped last season when he missed five games with an ankle injury. Bottom line: Despite impressive skills, his size could be a hindrance against big nose tackles. Late-round prospect with a lot of upside if he can add some weight. Final grade: 2.9

Jeff McCurley, Pittsburgh 6-4 278 5.25 6th round

NFL comparison: Barret Robbins, Raiders Strengths: Has good height/weight/speed combination. Plays with great intensity. Knows his position well and makes good adjustments to different defensive looks. Alert and instinctive. Takes good angles to defenders. Weaknesses: Not as fluid of an athlete as you would like in a center. Has only adequate strength and size. Needs to bulk up to compete in NFL. Notable: Started at defensive tackle as true freshman in 1997 before moving to offensive line. Bottom line: Consistent competitor at Pitt but doesn't have size to play in NFL. If he improves his strength, he's a late-round prospect. Final grade: 2.4

Reed Diehl, California 6-31/8 292 5.25 7th round

NFL comparison: Jerry Ostroski, Bills Strengths: Versatile player who was converted from offensive tackle. Good size for center. Physical in the trenches. Moves the pile at the point of attack. Intelligent player who shows good leadership skills. Weaknesses: Not very mobile. Has trouble recovering his balance when defenders give him double moves. Shows marginal ability to hold his ground in pass coverage. Notable: Started games at center, guard and tackle last season. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with his versatility. Could be moved to guard but

lacks mobility to play tackle. Will need to improve his balance and footwork but has the frame and know-how to make a roster. Final grade: 1.7

Matt Lehr, Virginia Tech 6-13/4 285 5.00 7th round

NFL comparison: Matt Birk, Vikings Strengths: A product of hard work. Combines good quickness with excellent preparation to win battles. Gets great positioning and studies film, which is why he eventually can move from guard to center. Feisty player with good upper-body strength. Excellent in pass protection. Weaknesses: Gets pushed off his feet too often. Not particularly dominant in running game. Needs to win with angles or quickness; rarely will win a matchup with power. Will need time to make transition to center. Notable: Benched 450 pounds in college, a record for a guard at Virginia Tech. Bottom line: Quick and aggressive but simply doesn't have the strength to dominate matchups in the NFL. We think he will need to move to center, but he could remain at guard if he puts on a few pounds. Final

Jason Inskeep, James Madison 6-31/4 285 5.30 Free agent

NFL comparison: Frank Garcia, Panthers Strengths: Instinctive, intelligent player with great upside. Improves with each game. Makes great line calls. Takes great angles and is strong at the point of attack Weaknesses: Has average athletic ability. Lack of experience (has played center only two seasons) could turn off some coaches and scouts. Will need to add bulk. Notable: State heavyweight wrestling champion in high school. Bottom line: Feel for game is impressive. He's a late-round guy or undrafted free agent because he's from a smaller school and hasn't played the position very long. Once he gets into a camp, could shock some people by earning a roster spot. Final grade: 1.0

Jeff Garner, Texas Christian 6-31/4 291 5.40 Free agent

NFL comparison: Olin Kreutz, Bears

Strengths: Has great work ethic and toughness. Plays bigger than his size. Extremely active guy who moves the pile. Uses great leg drive to consistently finish off his blocks. Weaknesses: Needs to play with better leverage; tends to bend too much at waist. Durability is a concern because of previous right knee problems. Lacks explosiveness off the snap. Notable: Originally signed with TCU as a defensive end. Bottom line: Lacks athleticism of other centers, but his intensity stands out. Plays with no fear. Final grade: 0.8

Others: Steve Schiller, Tulsa, 6-41/4, 285, 5.47 (40 time); Zac Zedalis, Florida, 6-2, 280, 5.20; Doug Rosfeld, Cincinnati, 6-27/8, 276, 5.49; Troy Andrew, Duke, 6-4, 285, 5.20; Shane Grice, Mississippi, 6-15/8, 315, 5.13.

Casev Rabach

The names and history had an impact on Casey Rabach's career at Wisconsin. How could they not?

Ken Bowman played 10 years in the NFL and started for three championship teams in Green Bay. Mike Webster was a poster boy for the rough-and-rugged Steelers dynasty in the 1970s and was elected to the Pro Football Hall



of Fame. Washington's Cory Raymer, when healthy, is one of the NFL's top voung centers.

This is what Rabach walked into at Wisconsin five years ago: being the center of attention in the center of it all on the Wisconsin line.

"You're always aware of that tradition." Rabach says. "Those guys are unique individuals. You just try to do your part, hold your end up."

Rabach did more than that. The question is: Can his versatility translate to the NFL? Wisconsin coaches believe Rabach (6-4%, 296) can develop into a solid NFL player, and potentially much more.

He's not the strongest player on the draft board, and he's not the most physically impressive. But it's not about what Rabach doesn't have; it's about what he has that's rare in the NFL these days.

"He has a passion about the way he plays," one AFC personnel director says. "He has the frame, so you can work with that and make him more physical. You can't teach someone to have that aggressive attitude and desire. He's got it."

As did Bowman, Webster and Raymer. None of the three was physically impressive coming out of college, but all made immediate impacts in the NFL.

Rabach, who never played center before college, moved there after redshirting his first year at Wisconsin. His athleticism and agility allowed Wisconsin coaches to adjust blocking schemes and use Rabach to pull on some plays.

There's a reason Wisconsin averaged more than 219 rushing yards per game during Rabach's four years as starting center. The Badgers' signature play was Zone 28 or 29, where Rabach pulled and blocked the inside linebacker to help spring the tailback outside. It was successful with Michael Bennett last season and Ron Dayne before that.

"He allowed us to do some blocking schemes that a lot of people don't even try to do," says Wisconsin coach Barry Alvarez.

It also allowed Rabach to reach those lofty expectations. -Matt Hayes

DEFENSIVE EN

OVERRATED

Roland Seymour, Florida State

Undersized, not strong enough and too inconsistent. And did we say he's a one-dimensional player?

UNDERRATED

Cedric Scott, Southern Mississippi

His ability to hold up at the point of attack makes him a coveted prospect.

SLEEPER

Kenvon Coleman, UCLA

Once considered a top player at this position, he could recover from his knee injury and surprise a lot of people.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Justin Smith, Missouri

His ability to defend the run as well as the pass is the No. 1 reason he should be the first end taken.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Jamal Reynolds, Florida State

For the same reason Smith's stock is rising, Reynolds' is falling-he can't defend the run.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-5 285 4.65

6-2 255 5.00

With the majority of NFL teams using a 4-3 scheme, the demand for pass-rushing defensive ends has never been greater. In the 4-3, most of the pass rush comes from the edge, so the ends must have quickness and athletic ability. The right end is usually a team's best pass rusher, as he is coming off the backside edge and is usually rushing at the quarterback's blind side. Speed and explosiveness are critical attributes, but the right end also must be able to run down ballcarriers on the backside. The right end must also be able to hold up at least adequately against the run, which means he cannot get by as a one-dimensional undersized athlete. He must have some bulk and ability to anchor at the point of attack. The left end in the 4-3 also must have some pass-rush ability but power is more important for him for two reasons: 1) He is matching up against big, strong right tackles and also tight ends; 2) Most offenses are righthanded, and the bulk of their running attack will be focused at the left end position. The need to play strong at the point of attack and still put pressure on the quarterback makes good left ends very difficult to find. In 3-4 defenses, the ends are more physical and are asked to play the run more than the pass. They almost are like defensive tackles in terms of their skills, as most of the pass rush in the 3-4 comes from the outside linebackers. Ends in the 3-4 are asked to stack at the point of attack, stop the run and occupy blockers.

on't be fooled by a few big names from some big-time programs. This is not a very good class of defensive ends

Missouri's Justin Smith has been shooting up the charts because he is the only end who has the size and quickness to play the run and pass equally well. He's almost certain to be drafted in the top 10, maybe even the top five. After Smith, Jamal Reynolds is



highly touted as an athlete, but concerns about his ability to hold up against the

run have teams backing away.

Andre Carter is the only other player who deserves first-round consideration, but he's a 260-pounder who runs a 4.85 40-not ideal numbers for a first-round defensive lineman.

There are lots of second- and third-round prospects who offer a lot of one-dimensional qualities-including Cedric Scott, DeLawrence Grant, Karon Riley, Roland Seymour and Aaron Schobel-but you can't

really build an NFL line around any of them.

There are, however, three players to keep an eye on in the mid-to-late rounds. Kenyon Coleman entered his senior year at UCLA as one of the top three prospects, but he blew out his knee and is still recovering. If given a chance, Coleman could shock some people, because he has all the tools. Dwayne Missouri could move inside and become a flashy pass rusher on third downs. And Fred Wakefield has too much size and natural ability not to at least make a roster as a reserve. *Denotes underclassman.

Justin Smith, Missouri* 6-4 277 4.65 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Robert Porcher, Lions

Vs. the run: Not a complete product yet, but he's getting there. Has great initial quickness off the line and moves well laterally. Knows how to use his hands and comes off his

blocks well. Not a great run-stuffer, but not a liability, either. Grade: 7.3

Pass rush: Shows quick feet and excellent burst off the line. Beats a lot of guys with quick first step. Doesn't have great speed but is good enough to get around the edge. Still needs to work on pass-rush moves, but he shows the quickness to improve.

Grade: 7.5 Initial quickness:

Outstanding off the ball. Rarely takes a false step and explodes out of the blocks. Will need to learn to come out lower, but in terms of quickness, he's elite. Grade:

Run/pass recognition: Rarely gets lost. Has tremendous instincts and a nose for the ball. Comes off his blocks and takes few false steps in pursuit. Knows his responsibilities and rarely blows an assignment. Grade: 7.6

Pursuit/tackling: Has explosive strength and a motor

that doesn't quit. Always working to track down ball. Grade: 7.7

Notable: In 1998, he became the first true freshman in more than a decade to start every game at Missouri.

Bottom line: Probably didn't get the recognition in college he deserved. Has tremendous instincts, power and a sense of the game. Rare combination of size and speed.

Final grade: 7.6

Jamal Reynolds, Florida State 6-21/8 268 4.68 1st round

NFL comparison: Jason Taylor, Dolphins



MOTOR MAN: Smith's style of play is relentless, and his size/speed combination is rare.

Vs. the run: Has great speed and can chase down most running backs. Like Jevon Kearse, has a tendency to get pushed around at the point of attack. Does have upside and can improve in this area, but right now, it's his biggest weakness. Grade: 6.2

Pass rush: Has rare speed and outstanding first step. Rarely gets beat to the corner. Shows good moves in pursuit. Top pass rusher in this class. Grade: 7.9

Initial quickness: Burst out of stance is as good as it gets. Instincts and first move are



It didn't take California defensive end Andre Carter long to find out who his dad really was. Only about five or six years, courtesy of a convenience store.

In a promotional event, the Denver area 7-Eleven stores put some of the Broncos on plastic commemorative cups. One day, young Andre just happened to get a cup with the image of a defensive tackle named Rubin Carter etched on it.

"I think I was like 5 or 6 years old," Carter says. "Back then, I was like, 'Oh, my dad plays football." But I just thought he was going out and playing football with the boys, kind of like when you see high school kids or junior high kids just go out and have fun.

"I didn't really realize it until then, and I was like, 'Oh, wow. OK, I understand now.' "

Other sports—tennis, basketball and tae kwon do—consumed young Carter's time as he was growing up. Then, with the blessing of his mom and dad, he started playing football in ninth grade.

"The whole ninth-grade year I started weight training," he says. "I was like 185 pounds then. I remember my 10th-grade year I always ate a dozen doughnuts each night. It was either a dozen doughnuts or peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches and milk each night to put on some weight."

Carter is still struggling to keep his weight. After playing last season at 260, he weighed 249 at the combine, leading to questions about his ability to play the run. But during his career at Cal, he produced a school-record 301/2 sacks, and he is projected to be a first-round pick. "If you could clone people like they clone those sheep, he would be the ideal person to clone," Cal defensive line coach Bob Dutton says. "He has the attitude, desire, coachability and a sense of urgency to strive and improve."

That's a far cry from the days when Carter's mom would have to bribe him to go to Broncos games, and he would fall asleep there, anyway. Now, Carter is about to head to the NFL.

"He is the complete, total package," Dutton says. "I've coached a lot of players, and I've sent several to the NFL, and he's better right now than any of them were."

But his mom and dad come first to Carter.

"This last season, (my dad) came to my last two games—the Oregon game and the Stanford game," Carter says. "The same with my mom. I was just happy they were there and able to come to my last game. That was the best moment of my life." -Andy Clendennen

exceptional. Gets off the ball with great power and stays level. Grade: 7.7

Run/pass recognition: For most of his college career, he simply has been an upfield guy who doesn't worry about reading keys or recognizing the run. Coachable guy who will continue to improve in this area. Grade: 7.3 Pursuit/tackling: Great in space and can chase down just about anybody. Does a nice job using his hands to avoid getting caught in traffic. Explosive tackler who has learned to "tomahawk" quarterbacks from the backside. Tends to tackle too high, usually when trying to force a fumble. Grade: 7.3

Notable: Two older brothers also played college football-Rashad at Rice and Diron at Wake Forest.

Bottom line: Best athlete-pound for poundin this year's draft. Has rare combination of size and speed and continues to develop his game. Senior season was a bit of a disappointment, but he really wasn't used correctly and played through some nagging injuries. Will be a great player, especially rushing the passer, right away in NFL.

Final grade: 7.3

Andre Carter, California 6-4 249 4.85 1st round

NFL comparison: Kenny Holmes, Titans Vs. the run: Plays with type of leverage coaches love to see. Holds his ground and does a nice job recognizing the run. Loss of weight (from 260 last season to 249 at the combine) raises questions about his ability to hold up against the run. Grade: 6.9

Pass rush: Doesn't have top 40-yard dash time but has quick first step and some powerful moves. Does an excellent job of getting upfield and working his way back inside.

Has strong club move, and his initial quickness allows him to get a jump on most offensive tackles. Grade: 7.3

Initial quickness: For a guy Carter's size, his quickness is exceptional. Shows great burst off ball, comes out low and accelerates into second and third steps. Grade: 7.7

Run/pass recognition: Has improved in this area. Always seems to know where the ball is but tends to get too far upfield and will run himself out of the play. Grade: 7.0

Pursuit/tackling: Doesn't have great chase speed, but he's quick and will make a lot of plays in backfield. Sure tackler. Explodes through the ballcarrier and has some bigplay flair. But won't make a lot of plays downfield. Grade: 7.0

Notable: Son of former Miami All-American and Broncos standout Rubin Carter.

Bottom line: Person of high character who always gives 100 percent. Great team player and has the tools to develop into Pro Bowlcaliber player. There are concerns about his weight, but he should go in the second half of the first round.

Final grade: 7.2

Cedric Scott, Southern Mississippi 6-51/4 274 4.75 2nd round

NFL comparison: Chad Bratzke, Colts

Vs. the run: Has good feet, athleticism, size and explosive power. Tough to move and generally plays the game on his feet. Shows a good nose for ball and holds his ground at point of attack. His combination of size and speed should allow him to excel against the run in the NFL. Grade: 7.0

Pass rush: There's a lot of potential here, but Scott hasn't realized all of it. Has the speed and explosiveness to make an impact; simply

needs to become more consistent. Will use his hands and arms to shed blockers but comes up short too often. Grade: 6.7 Initial quickness: Burst off the ball is impressive for a player his size. Works at getting off the ball and generally comes out low with good leverage on the blocker. Grade: 6.8 Run/pass recognition: Very average in this area. Tends to get caught up at the line of scrimmage instead of getting off the block and looking for the ball. Grade: 5.7

Pursuit/tackling: Not a guy who will make a lot of plays from behind and certainly isn't a sideline-to-sideline player. But has good speed and can make plays in the backfield by chasing down a quarterback or a dancing runner. Grade: 6.3

Notable: Studying sports administration in grad school after earning an undergraduate degree in exercise science.

Bottom line: Has moved up draft board for two reasons: 1) Has the size and speed combination that a lot of the top players at his position do not, and 2) Showed everyone at Senior Bowl that he can rush the passer.

Final grade: 6.6

DeLawrence Grant, Oregon State 6-2% 257 4.75 2nd round

NFL comparison: Maa Tanuvasa, Broncos

Vs. the run: Tough and physical but lacks height and bulk. Will have to beat offensive tackles with quickness and moves in order to play the run effectively in NFL. Grade: 5.7 Pass rush: Very active. Has good speed and great quickness. Shows a lot of moves upfield and has a good sense of when to "club" back inside. Lack of height worries scouts, but he finds a way to get in the face of the quarterback. Grade: 6.8

Initial quickness: This is Grant's best quality. Gets a great jump off the ball and beats most guys with first step. **Grade: 7.1**

Run/pass recognition: Recognizing the run has been somewhat of a problem. He's always working to get upfield, so he will take himself out of plays at times. Will need to play in a scheme where he is asked to get upfield without worrying about responsibility inside. Grade: 5.5

Pursuit/tackling: Made a lot of plays in college because he has good motor and could track down players. But this area could represent his biggest adjustment in the NFL, as he doesn't have exceptional speed. Grade: 5.9 Notable: A cousin, Ryan Tyiska, played linebacker at Southern California from 1993-97. Bottom line: Grant is a junior college transfer who did a terrific job rushing the passer at Oregon State. Scouts love his upside. If he is unable to add more weight, he could end up playing outside linebacker.

Final grade: 6.2

Karon Riley, Minnesota 6-2% 250 4.70 3rd round

NFL comparison: Simeon Rice, Cardinals Strengths: Could be a 'tweener-is he an outside linebacker or end? At his best as a rush end. Has good speed off the edge, but quickness is his real strength. Seems to have good pass-rush moves and takes great angles to the ball. Does great job of getting in the backfield and disrupting plays. Weaknesses: Liability against the run because of size. Unless he bulks up, he will be a situational pass rusher in NFL. Notable: Led Big Ten in sacks (13) and tied for lead in tackles for loss (20) last season. Bottom line: Riley is a tremendous athlete at end. Has all the bigplay skills scouts look for in a pass rusher but doesn't hold up against the run. Could go in second round if-and only if-a team thinks it can bulk him up. Final grade: 5.9

Roland Seymour, Florida State 6-2½ 245 4.50 3rd round

NFL comparison: Lance Johnstone, Raiders **Strengths:** Upfield rusher with great speed and tremendous athleticism. Quick, fast and explosive. Very few players can outrun him. Weaknesses: Size. Was in trouble when teams ran at him in college, which means there is no way he can hold up at the point of attack in the NFL. Doesn't have the frame to bulk up much, either, so his potential is limited. One-dimensional player. Notable: His uncle, Al Jenkins, was an offensive lineman on Dolphins' undefeated 1972 team. Bottom line: Seymour was overrated coming into his senior year but still has some great qualities. Will develop into an explosive third-down pass rusher and is worthy of consideration on the first day. Final grade: 5.7

Aaron Schobel, Texas Christian 6-3 263 4.63 3rd round

NFL comparison: Trace Armstrong, Dolphins Strengths: Very consistent. Productive outside rusher with excellent quickness and a tremendous first step. Shows great burst upfield and good change-of-direction skills. Never stops hustling. Weaknesses: Size is a significant limitation. Has trouble holding his ground at point of attack. Notable: Defensive Player of the Year in the WAC last season. Bottom line: Schobel is a classic one-dimensional pass rusher with great quickness and burst. Lacks size to play on running downs and doesn't have great natural speed. Upside is limited. Final grade: 5.4

Skyle Vanden Bosch, Nebraska 6-3³/₄ 260 4.65 3rd round

NFL comparison: Rob Burnett, Ravens Strengths: Never stops hustling. Intelligent guy with mean streak. Big-time hitter. Shows nice pass-rush moves. Very strong and holds up well at point of attack. Weaknesses: Needs to improve speed-rushing skills. On the small side for an end. Needs to improve footwork. Plays out of control at times and overpursues the ball. For a guy with good tools and better-thanaverage size and speed, Vanden Bosch is not the player he should be. Notable: He and an older brother built a weight room in the family garage while growing up in Iowa. Bottom line: Must bulk up for the NFL because he is not quick enough to play linebacker. Likely will get drafted late in the first day but needs to be more productive as pass rusher if he hopes to stick in NFL very long. Final grade: 5.1

David Warren, Florida State 6-21/8 233 4.40 4th round

NFL comparison: Mike Mamula, Eagles Strengths: Speed is as good as it gets for the position. Upfield burst is outstanding. Flies off the ball and rarely gets met when turning the corner. Excellent athlete. Weaknesses: He's an athlete, not a football player. Instincts are poor. Doesn't have the size or run/pass recognition skills to play every down. Doesn't have the strength or pass-rush moves to win one-on-one battles if offensive tackles get their hands on him. Notable: Attended same high school as Hall of Famer Earl Campbell. Bottom line: Warren can only do one thing: rush the passer. Doesn't have the size to play end and doesn't have the instincts to be a linebacker. A team likely will take a chance on him in the third round because of his ability to rush the passer. Final grade: 5.0

Joe Tafoya, Arizona 6-35/8 258 4.80 4th round

NFL comparison: Marco Coleman, Redskins Strengths: Throwback player. Plays with great toughness. Has good quickness and holds his ground at the point of attack. Never stops hustling. Makes a lot of plays with quickness and hustle. Doesn't have great size or great speed, but he's always around the ball. Weaknesses: A bit undersized. Tends to get pushed around when blockers get their hands on him. Often plays

too high and needs to display better leverage, particularly against the run. Notable: Led Arizona in sacks (6) and tackles for loss (18) last season. Bottom line: Coaches will fall in love with Tafoya's toughness and work ethic. However, intensity and passion only get you so far in the NFL. Final grade: 4.6

Reggie Hayward, Iowa State 6-4¾ 246 4.77 4th round

NFL comparison: Ebenezer Ekuban, Cowboys Strengths: A former basketball and track star, his biggest strength is his athleticism for his size. Has decent speed and makes a lot of plays as an edge pass rusher. Shows great quickness and strong first move. Gets upfield and is very disruptive in the backfield. Weaknesses: Lack of bulk and pure strength hurt his chances to be an every-down NFL player. He's an easy target in the run game and not as fast or explosive as some of the top pass rushers. Notable: Produced 31 quarterback hurries, 10 tackles for loss and seven sacks last season. Bottom line: Lacks the elite speed to be dominant pass rusher. Also lacks the size and strength to hold up against the run, so his long-range potential is limited. Final grade: 4.3

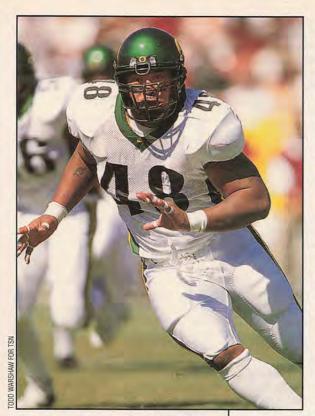
Ellis Wyms, Mississippi State 6-2½ 267 4.99 4th round

NFL comparison: Lamar King, Seahawks Strengths: Better against the run than pass. Great size and strength. Plays with tremendous leverage and quick feet. Very good lower-body strength and usually overpowers people in one-on-one matchups. Has played some defensive tackle, so he could play end on run downs and tackle on passing downs in certain systems. Weaknesses: Doesn't have enough speed to rush the passer off the edge. Is mostly a run-stuffing end with marginal speed and agility. Has trouble recognizing the pass and doesn't have the burst to get upfield. Notable: Started only nine of 40 games at Mississippi State. Bottom line: Run-stuffing ends are hard to come by. Wyms won't be able to play much on third downs, but he is as good as anyone against the run in this class. Final grade: 4.1

Saul Patu, Oregon 6-2% 261 4.87 5th round

NFL comparison: Brandon Mitchell, Patriots Strengths: Runs well and never stops hustling. Has decent size and is better against the run than pass. Plays with good leverage and has improved his strength and run/pass recognition. Physical player who rarely loses one-on-one battles but rarely beats anyone with quickness. Weaknesses: Lacks great first step and has marginal acceleration. Doesn't offer much as a pass rusher. Notable: Graduated in spring of 2000 with a degree in educational studies. Bottom line: Stumpy player with great strength and aggressiveness against the run. Overall, a one-dimensional run-stuffer with little value as a pass rusher.

Final grade: 3.8



ROADBLOCK: The hard-working Patu isn't much of a pass rusher but is a force against the run.

Kenyon Coleman, UCLA 6-4 274 4.92 5th round

NFL comparison: Andre Wadsworth, Cardinals Strengths: Has good build and is a very fluid athlete. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Does a nice job of firing out of his stance and making plays. Has tremendous upside but should be a lot better than he is. Weaknesses: Doesn't have much lower-body strength and tends to get blown off the ball. Doesn't hold up well in tight one-on-one battles. Needs to use better leverage. Takes plays off and needs to play with more intensity. Not very physical. Knee injury is biggest concern. Notable: Likes to sing in his spare time. Bottom line: Coleman played just three games his senior season because of a knee injury that is still being rehabilitated. Before his injury, he had all the tools but never put them together. His limited lower-body strength might scare off teams. Has only average NFL speed for a pass rusher but is an excellent athlete. Final grade: 3.5

Dwayne Missouri, Northwestern 6-4% 263 4.94 5th round

NFL comparison: Orpheus Roye, Browns Strengths: Extremely good weight-room strength and shows a lot of explosion off the line and as a tackler. Shows great quickness for an inside rush guy but lacks the pure speed to be an edge rusher. Had a good senior season, capped off by an impressive bowl game, proving he has the potential to be a disruptive inside player. Weaknesses: A 'tweener who is too lean to play inside and

not fast enough to be an edge pass rusher. Needs to add some bulk and play with more consistency. Notable: Led high school team to a 16-0 record and a Texas state championship in 1995. Bottom line: Has very good quickness and explosion as an inside pass rusher but is limited because of a lack of weight. Final grade: 3.3

Fred Wakefield, Illinois 6-61/2 274 4.90 5th round

NFL comparison: Phil Hansen,

Strengths: Student of the game. Shows good athleticism. A former tight end who is quick off the ball and always plays hard. Active against the run and does a nice job of knowing responsibilities. Has a lot of upside. Weaknesses: Marginal speed limits his pass-rushing ability. Needs to bulk up and add strength

to hold up against the run. Notable: Led the Big Ten in tackles for loss last season (21) and was second in sacks (9). Bottom line: Wakefield will be a good experiment for the team that drafts him. Has good natural athleticism and the frame to add some weight. He knows the game and plays with great intensity and intelligence. Final grade: 3.2

Ross Kolodziej, Wisconsin 6-2% 290 4.78 6th round

NFL comparison: Grant Wistrom, Rams Strengths: Has good size and strength and will wow you in the weight room. Plays extremely hard and is intelligent. Uses good fundamentals and tackles well. Likes contact and never stops hustling. Better against the run than the pass. Weaknesses: Is a fast guy for his size when timed but doesn't show a lot of quickness on the field. Has trouble getting off blocks and isn't a threat as a pass rusher. Takes up space. Practices better than he plays. Notable: One of Wisconsin's strongest players, he produced a 425-pound bench press and a 675-pound squat. Bottom line: Most scouts can't figure this guy out. His workout numbers are phenomenal, but he hasn't proved his skills. Works hard but can't seem to put it all together. Final grade: 2.9

Anthony Herron, Iowa 6-25/8 279 4.90 6th round

NFL comparison: Rick Lyle, Jets Strengths: Has a terrific build and natural strength. Shows more quickness than pure speed. Very good in backside pursuit and plays tough inside. Gets great leverage against blockers. Looks like a guy who can contribute as a run-stuffing specialist on first and second down. Weaknesses: Durability is questionable. Tends to wear down late in games-probably will be a situational player in the NFL. Doesn't move real well and tends to get out of position. Offers little as pass rusher. Notable: Lettered in basketball and track in high school. Bottom line: Played end in college but might move inside in the NFL because he doesn't have enough speed to be an edge rusher. He's an above-average athlete for his size and could be a situational contributor right away on running downs. Final grade: 2.6

Bryan Ray, Wake Forest 6-21/2 260 4.68 6th round

NFL comparison: Raylee Johnson, Chargers Strengths: Plays with intensity. Smart and tough. A tactical player who wastes no motion getting off blocks. Has quick feet and hands and gets off the ball fast. Impressive physical specimen. Isn't a pure pass rusher but shows some nice moves and a quickenough first step to contribute as one in the NFL. Weaknesses: Has trouble shedding blockers at times. Needs to add some weight and is a marginal athlete. Can be overwhelmed by big offensive tackles. Also a bit of a 'tweener. Isn't fast enough to play end and not big enough to play tackle. Notable: Only Michael McCrary had more career sacks at Wake Forest. Bottom line: Ray relies more on knowledge than pure skill and could get exposed in the pros. Scouts like the fact he continued to improve throughout his college career. He'll need a great camp to earn a roster spot. Final grade: 2.3

Monty Beisel, Kansas State 6-3% 258 4.80 6th round

NFL comparison: Chuck Smith, Panthers Strengths: Pure athlete with quick hands. Never gives up on a play. Displays good backside pursuit. Never stops hustling. Quick off the ball and a physical player at the point of attack. Weaknesses: Needs to refine his football skills. Lacks consistency. Must improve on his footwork. Might be playing out of position at end, but he's too small to play tackle. Lets blockers get in to his body too often. There is concern he will be in over his head physically in the NFL. Notable: Surpassed his previous career total with 102 tackles in 2000. Bottom line: Must learn better technique to succeed in NFL. Has to learn how to use his hands and improve his overall strength. Unless he gets better at taking on blocks, he won't make it through camp. Final grade: 2.2

Others: Brady McDonnell, Colorado, 6-35/8. 263, 4.57 (40 time); Andy Bowers, Utah, 6-5, 277, 4.79; Felipe Claybrooks, Georgia Tech, 6-33/4, 254, 4.92; Paul Toviessi, Marshall, 6-61/2, 246, 4.85; Devon Finn, Illinois State, 6-5, 265, 4.90; Randy Garner, Arkansas, 6-33/4, 271, 4.77; Derrick Burgess, Mississippi, 6-25/8, 262, 4.99; Menson Holloway, Texas-El Paso, 6-17/s, 270, 4.85.

DEFENSIVE TACH

OVERRATED

Willie Howard, Stanford

He may be limited to third-down situations until he adds strength and bulk.

UNDERRATED

Casey Hampton, Texas

He isn't the most talented player around, but few work harder at their job.

SLEEPER

Mario Monds, Cincinnati

A run-stuffer who could contribute right away on first and second downs.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Kenny Smith, Alabama

He could have been the most impressive defensive lineman at the Senior Bowl.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Ennis Davis, Southern California

His lack of production as a senior has a lot of scouts worried about his ability to step up in the NFL.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-4 310 4.90 MINIMUM 6-0½ 275 5.20

The defensive tackle position has evolved dramatically over the past several years in the NFL. With most teams playing a 4-3 defense, the NFL is featuring more and more massive defensive tackles, who line up over big, physical guards and are asked to stuff the run. In some schemes, these are "two-gap" tackles who are not asked to get a lot of penetration but to simply force a stalemate at the point of attack while protecting the linebackers from blockers. The other type of defensive tackle is a "one-gap" penetrator who relies on quickness to beat the physical but less athletic guard he lines up against. Many "one-gap" tackles, such as Warren Sapp and John Randle, have great success as inside pass rushers because of their superior guickness and explosion. In 3-4 schemes, the defensive tackle is really a nose tackle, and for the most part, he is a two-gap run-stuffer who jams the inside and frees inside linebackers to make plays. Big, physical tackles such as former Bills standout Ted Washington can give offenses real problems because of their ability to not only shut off the inside run but also to prevent the center from getting to the inside linebackers in run-blocking schemes. If you really want to know the value of solid play at defensive tackle, just just look at the Super Bowl champion Ravens. Their standout duo of Tony Siragusa and Sam Adams clogged up the middle all last season, allowing middle

linebacker Ray Lewis the freedom to make plays and pile up huge tackle numbers.

his is the premier class of the draft. With 11 probable draftees in the first three rounds, the defensive tackle class has as much quantity as quality.

There is little that separates Richard Seymour and Gerard Warren, the group's top players, and Shaun Rogers isn't too far behind. Damione Lewis is the fastest-rising player in the class after having a spectacular year as a disruptive inside player for Miami (Fla.).

He is rated just ahead of Kenny Smith, who is per-

haps the most underrated player in the class. If Smith were to move up to a first-round pick by draft day, it would not surprise many

Marcus Stroud and Casey Hampton, the players whose stock has dropped the most, might be the most talented of the bunch but have yet to realize it. When players with the skills of Adrian Wilson and Mario Monds are rated 15th and 16th in the class, it shows the depth of talent.

*Denotes underclassman.

Richard Seymour, Georgia 6-5¾ 295 4.90 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Bryant Young, 49ers

Vs. the run: Big and strong. Never stops hustling or chasing the ball. Sometimes fails to stay low and get good leverage on blockers. Coachable and will get better. Grade: 7.7 Pass rush: Can play inside or outside. Has good upfield speed and has developed nice moves. Has tremendously quick first step and uses hands to manipulate blockers. Can bull-rush and collapse the pocket but is just as effective using a swim move to finesse his way to the quarterback. Grade: 7.8

Initial quickness: This trait distinguishes him. Has great instincts and a feel for the snap count. Bursts off the snap and shows great initial power. Must get better initial leverage; tends to get too straight out of his stance. Grade: 7.8 Run/pass recognition:

Above average. Can get upfield and rush the passer or dominate at the line of scrimmage. Rarely gets fooled by the draw or screen and has enough closing speed to recover from false steps. Grade: 7.3 Pursuit/tackling: The most active tackle in the draft. Is mobile, quick, light on his feet and a wrap-up tackler. Uses quickness to get through traffic and shows great hands to shed blockers in pursuit. Grade: 7.9 Notable: One of the youngest seniors ever at Georgia. Turned 21 last season

Bottom line: Most productive and talented tackle in the class. Still needs some coaching, but his work ethic and learning ability are two of his best qualities.

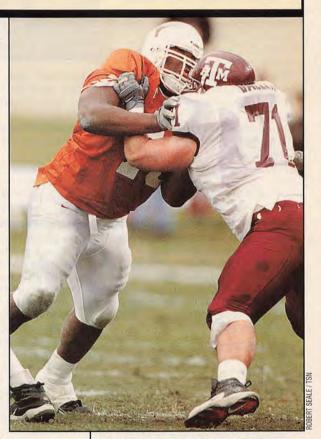
Final grade: 7.7

Gerard Warren, Florida* 6-3 308 5.05 1st round

NFL comparison: Warren Sapp, Buccaneers

Vs. the run: Has excellent size and strength and knows how to use his hands to hold up blockers and shed them. Could play in a two-gap scheme but probably would be better as an upfield guy because of his great first step. Will step in right away and be a force against the run. Grade: 7.9

Pass rush: Has quick first step and good lateral movement. Makes excellent use of his hands; plays with leverage. Quicker than he is fast and does a great job of shooting the



CLOGS GAPS: Rogers (left) should go in the first round, but his weight and desire are concerns.

gap. Makes a consistent surge every time he rushes the passer. Grade: 7.7

Initial quickness: Outstanding burst for his size. Comes out low and rarely gets beat to the gap. Grade: 7.7

Run/pass recognition: Sometimes runs himself out of plays or allows himself to be taken out because his recognition skills are not what they should be. Grade: 6.8

Pursuit/tackling: Faster than his 40-yard dash time. A sure tackler with some explosion if he catches the ballcarrier square. Grade: 7.4

Seymour/Stroud

Seymour and Stroud. Stroud and Seymour. It's hard to talk about one of the Georgia defensive tackle standouts without mentioning the other.

Indeed, Richard Seymour and Marcus Stroud formed one of the biggest-each is taller than 6-5 and in the vicinity of 300 pounds-and best tandems in the nation the past few seasons. Seymour is projected to be a high first-round pick, and Stroud could go late in the first round.

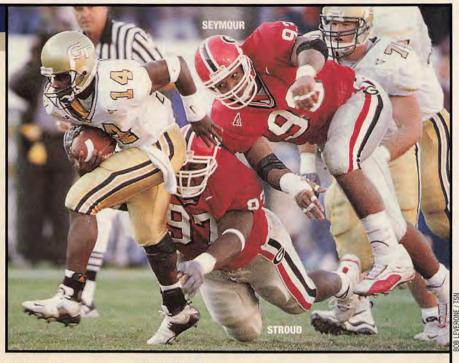
"The first thing you see is their size, which is very imposing," Georgia defensive line coach Rodney Garner says. "You just don't see guys with that kind of height playing inside. But when you actually take time to study them, you see how athletic the guys are. They are big guys who can really move."

Seymour had the more productive career because he tended to give a more consistent effort. Perhaps because he was less heralded than Stroud coming out of high school in Gadsden, S.C., Seymour was more inspired to work harder. "My dad always said, 'You

should always want to be the best,' so I came in and worked hard," says Seymour. "I didn't come out of high school heavily recruited. This all comes from hard work. It didn't come from awards and publicity. It came from hard work."

Conversely, Stroud appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated after signing day in 1996, when he reneged on a commitment to Florida and signed with Georgia. It was just more hype for an elite prospect.

Each player possesses a different style that complemented the other. Seymour is more of an athlete. He is considered a finesse player who is capable of catching your eye with a stunning play. Stroud, who redshirted in 1996, would rather attack a foe. He's more of a workmanlike plugger who



relies on strength.

The two further honed their skills by competing against each other in practice. If one guy made a play, the other wanted to do the same on the next snap. Often, that meant overcoming a double team. That prepared them for similar treatment during games.

"I feel if a team doesn't double-team me, I should make the play," Stroud says. "I feel like Richard and I are good-enough players where if they singleteamed us, it was totally disrespectful."

They weren't known for eye-popping numbers. But Seymour and Stroud excelled at tying up blockers and freeing Georgia's linebackers to make plays. NFL scouts can appreciate that. -Tom Dienhart

Notable: Only the third defensive player to leave Florida early for the draft since 1990. The others: Reggie McGrew and Jevon Kearse. Bottom line: Warren has everything scouts look for physically, but his effort is constantly questioned. He will be a first-round pick because of ability and potential.

Final grade: 7.5

Shaun Rogers, Texas 6-41/2 331 5.25 1st round

NFL comparison: Tony Siragusa, Ravens

Vs. the run: As disruptive as any tackle in the class when in shape. Great combination of size and quickness. Massive and knows how to clog gaps. Could play nose tackle in a 3-4 or a "shade"-lined up between the center and guard with the intent of tying up bothin a 4-3. As long as he's working at it, there are few who have more potential. Grade: 7.9 Pass rush: Won't beat a lot of offensive linemen with speed or first step but fires out and collapses the pocket extremely well. Tough to block in one-on-one situations and frees others to rush the passer. Grade: 7.0 Initial quickness: Not great but fires out low and uses excellent lower-body strength to uproot opponents. Has a history of slowing down as the game progresses. Grade: 6.5 Run/pass recognition: Shows a good feel for

the game, but his technique rarely changes. If he recognizes pass, he will stand more straight up and close down passing lanes. But his game is not rushing the passer; he's limited to bull-rushing. Grade: 7.3

Pursuit/tackling: Always working to get upfield but rarely changes direction and chases somebody down from the back side. Solid tackler who punishes ballcarriers if he gets a good shot. Grade: 7.2

Notable: Father Ernie, an offensive tackle. blocked for Jim Kelly while playing for the USFL's Houston Gamblers in 1984.

Bottom line: Scouts wonder if Rogers will keep working after he gets his first big paycheck. Has size, speed and power to be great, but how much does he want it? Should be a first-round pick, but teams might bypass him for fear that his weight always will be a concern.

Final grade: 7.2

Damione Lewis, Miami (Fla.) 6-21/2 285 4.90 2nd round

NFL comparison: John Randle, Vikings Vs. the run: Has one-gap written all over him. Very disruptive in the backfield with a great first step and explosive power but doesn't have the bulk or strength to con-

trol the line of scrimmage. Grade: 6.0

Pass rush: Few are quicker through the gap. Explodes out of his stance and beats most offensive lineman with first step. Runs well, can change direction and shows a lot of impressive swim and club moves as pass rusher. Grade: 7.7

Initial quickness: Rare quickness. This is how he wins most of his battles. Comes out low and knows the angles when shooting gaps. Grade: 7.8

Run/pass recognition: Has some trouble because he's always looking to get upfield. Never will be great against run. Grade: 5.6 Pursuit/tackling: Chases down a lot of plays from the back side. Likes to shoot gap and look for the ball after he's through line of scrimmage. Can be explosive tackler but consistency is lacking.

Notable: Related to McClinton Neal, goldmedal winner in the 400-meter hurdles at the 1992 Olympics.

Bottom line: Lewis has emerged because of productive senior season. Disruptive player with great quickness, strength and instincts. Might play more in passing situations, but he's a playmaker who should be drafted no later than second round.

Final grade: 6.8

Marcus Stroud, Georgia 6-51/2 305 5.00 2nd round

NFL comparison: Daryl Gardener, Dolphins Vs. the run: Full of potential but doesn't always use size and ability to its best. Has massive frame and can control the line of scrimmage but sometimes comes up too high and negates size by not playing with leverage. Grade: 7.5

Pass rush: Gets a push but that's about it. Knows how to use his hands and sometimes draws double-teams because of size, but he plays too stiff and isn't quick enough to beat his man off the ball. Grade: 6.0

Initial quickness: Shows flashes but lacks consistency. Massive run-stuffer who doesn't work to get a quick jump. Grade: 6.0 Run/pass recognition: Does good job of recognition and making adjustments. Works to get upfield and push the pocket as pass

rusher and knows when to clog holes and hold his ground as a run-stuffer. Grade: 7.0 Pursuit/tackling: A wrap-up tackler. Doesn't work to get downfield and rarely makes a play from behind. Grade: 6.0

Notable: Had 57 tackles and a team-best 24 quarterback pressures for Georgia last season. Bottom line: Might be the most gifted lineman in the class, but he takes plays off. Has all the tools to dominate against the run and pass. Despite marginal work ethic, he could get drafted in first round on potential.

Final grade: 6.5

Kenny Smith, Alabama 6-31/8 288 4.85 2nd round

NFL comparison: La'Roi Glover, Saints

Vs. the run: A one-gap guy who won't hold up many people but will cause commotion in the backfield by shooting gaps. Aggressive and takes great angles. Quick first move, fires through the hole. Grade: 6.0

Pass rush: Has a chance to make an impact in the middle as pass rusher. Powerful with good size. Shows the feet and lateral movement to get around people. Might be an every-down standout if he continues to improve variety of moves. Grade: 6.7

Initial quickness: Quick enough to be an edge rusher but lacks speed. Perfect fit as inside rusher because he has quick first step and fires out with leverage. Grade: 7.2

Run/pass recognition: A bit of a 'tweenerend and tackle-who sometimes takes himself out of position by getting too far upfield without jamming the lineman and checking for the run. Grade: 6.0

Pursuit/tackling: Solid on the move and does nice job of wrapping up. Not an explosive tackler but can chase from behind and plays from sideline-to-sideline. Grade: 6.4

Notable: Enjoys fishing, tennis and hunting. **Bottom line:** If he continues to prove he has recovered from knee surgery, he's a great prospect. Has good size and speed. Can play the run and pass-a rare commodity. Might be a high second-round choice because of an impressive showing in the Senior Bowl.

Final grade: 6.4

Casey Hampton, Texas 6-1 321 5.25 2nd round

NFL comparison: Tim Bowens, Dolphins

Vs. the run: Stout in this area. Does nice job of sliding off blocks. Never will chase down anyone but does good job holding ground and making penetration. One concern is that short arms will hinder ability to get separation. Grade: 7.0

Pass rush: A penetrator who gets adequate push but never beats anyone with quickness or speed. A bullrusher but not much more.

Grade: 5.9

Initial quickness: Gets off ball but only to drive into block. Better fit as two-gap guy; rarely slips gap. Grade: 5.9 Run/pass recognition: Does excellent job of recognizing run and working to flow toward ballcarrier. Sees the field well and shows a lot of football smarts. Grade: 6.5 Pursuit/tackling: Shows a lot of hustle and is quick to locate ball but doesn't chase down a lot of plays. Rarely misses a tackle. Grade: 5.7 Notable: Makes regular visits to Austin Children's Hospital. Bottom line: Stumpy runstuffer with little to offer on passing downs. Would be great in a two-gap scheme because he could control blockers and work the line of scrimmage. Not an everydown player.

Final grade: 6.2

Derrick Chambers, Florida 6-31/4 305 4.95 3rd round

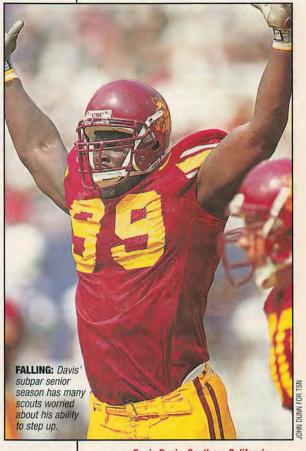
NFL comparison: Luther Elliss, Lions

Strengths: Has good quickness and uses his hands well to shed and control blockers. Plays with adequate ball awareness. Never gives up on a play. Moves well for a guy his size and will chase plays from behind. Probably a better fit in a one-gap scheme because his responsibilities would be limited and he could work to get upfield. Weaknesses: Sometimes has difficulty getting off blocks and sometimes gets too high and loses leverage against offensive linemen. Notable: Likes basketball, swimming and fishing. Bottom line: Played tackle in college but might be an end in the NFL, so he is bit of a 'tweener. Either way, he has the quickness and burst to contribute as tackle on passing downs. Final grade: 5.8

Willie Howard, Stanford 6-3% 294 4.94 3rd round

NFL comparison: Anthony McFarland, Bucs Strengths: Shows great leadership and never stops hustling. Strong and active and does a nice job rushing the passer. Weaknesses:

Might be bypassed in early rounds because he doesn't have bulk to play in a two-gap scheme and isn't a great one-gap rusher. Notable: Played in 2000 Rose Bowl despite ACL damage and an MCL sprain to his right knee. Bottom line: Howard continues to move up most draft boards because he has great intangibles and quickness. Will contribute right away-at least as situational pass rusher. Final grade: 5.6



Ennis Davis, Southern California 6-3% 293 5.10 3rd round

NFL comparison: Darrell Russell, Raiders Strengths: Massive yet mobile. Holds his ground at the point of attack. Has the strength to be perfect player in a two-gap scheme. Makes plays on move but is better near line of scrimmage. Technically sound footwork. Weaknesses: Must get in better shape and increase endurance. Tends to wear down late in games. Notable: Always wears a watch, fearing he'll lose it if he takes it off. Bottom line: Has lot of work to do in the weight room. His lack of productivity as a senior is a concern, but he is a good prospect. Final grade: 5.4

Ryan Pickett, Ohio State* 6-31/4 294 4.98 3rd round

NFL comparison: D'Marco Farr, free agent Strengths: Holds up well against run. Moves well for size and shows quick first step. If he works at it, he will beat opponents off the

snap. Could be a good one-gap rush guy. Weaknesses: Skills are raw. Tends to play too high at times and doesn't use hands well to shed blockers. Needs better coaching to learn the nuances of position. Susceptible to traps. Must develop more pass-rush moves. Notable: His brother, Booker, played at Miami (Fla.) in the early '90s. Bottom line: Would have benefited from more college game experience, but his impressive size is hard to pass up. Don't expect him to be an immediate impact player. Final grade: 5.1

Mario Fatafehi, Kansas State 6-21/8 307 5.10 4th round

NFL comparison: Chad Eaton, Patriots Strengths: Difficult to block because of outstanding quickness. Uses good run/pass recognition skills to make plays around the line. Holds his ground at the point of attack because of good lower-body strength. Weaknesses: Unpolished and must use his hands better to shed and control blockers. Has tough time rushing the passer because of wide body. Notable: Former junior college standout was named Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year in a vote of league coaches in 1999. Bottom line: Might have hard time playing in anything but a two-gap scheme because of his size. Played only two years in Division I, so coaches will be drawn to his upside. Final grade: 4.7

Ron Edwards, Texas A&M 6-23/4 288 4.77 4th round

NFL comparison: Gary Walker, Jaguars Strengths: Has good punch and uses it to create separation at line. Rarely gets pushed around. Does a great job getting out of his stance and holding his ground at point of attack. Force against the run. Weaknesses: Not much of a pass rusher; more of a twogap guy. Might be too small to play inside. Notable: Won Texas 5A state championship in the shot put and finished third in the discus as high school senior. Bottom line: A durable, throwback player. Though he always seems to hustle, his production tailed off late in college career. Final grade: 4.5

Daleroy Stewart, Southern Miss 6-31/8 310 4.83 4th round

NFL comparison: Larry Smith, Jaguars Strengths: Shows more quickness than pure speed. Can play tackle and end. Smart player with good instincts. Weaknesses: Must improve strength at point of attack. Needs to use hands better to shed and control blockers. Notable: Will graduate with degree in sports administration in May. Bottom line: Has tools to develop into effective inside rusher. Must learn to play like an inside guy because he doesn't have the flash to play on the outside. Final grade: 4.4

Adrian Wilson, Miami (Fla.)* 6-1 310 5.00 4th round

NFL comparison: Christian Peter, Giants Strengths: Has quick first step. Possesses the strength to control blockers. Explosive tackler who spends a lot of time in backfield. Bulk makes up for lack of height. Weaknesses: A bit top heavy. Sometimes allows blockers to get into his pads, then he's finished. Effort and character are questions; got into some off-field trouble before the 2000 season. Notable: Played two seasons at Carter High School in Dallas, same school that produced former Miami and current Giants linebacker Jessie Armstead. Bottom line: Has the ability to take over a game-if he makes a few big plays early. He's a fringe guy, and his off-field reputation might hurt his draft status. Final grade: 4.1

Mario Monds, Cincinnati 6-23/4 332 5.03 5th round

NFL comparison: Sam Adams, Ravens Strengths: Gap-type player who has the ability to hold his ground and plug holes. Has good upper-body strength and moves pile on first contact. Makes smart reads. Weaknesses: Not very athletic and displays only marginal footwork. Must clear traffic quicker. Doesn't play with much consistency. Tends to wear down and doesn't offer much as an inside pass rusher. Notable: His father, Wonder, was a first-team All-American safety at Nebraska in 1975. Bottom line: His technique is a bit raw. Scouts are concerned about his weight because he often appears fatigued. Powerful and tough to block in one-on-one situations, which makes him perfect candidate to play as situational run-stuffer. Final grade: 3.8

Shawn Worthen, Texas Christian 6-05/8 306 5.03 5th round

NFL comparison: Norman Hand, Saints Strengths: Great hand speed and sheds blockers well. Displays great instincts. Uses his low center of gravity to uproot offensive linemen. Shows great technique. Weaknesses: A bit short and doesn't always get a great first step. Doesn't overwhelm anyone with his size. Notable: Two-time Texas 4A all-state player in high school. Bottom line: Strength impresses scouts but lack of height turns off some of them. Worth a roster spot. Final grade: 3.6

Kris Jenkins, Maryland 6-51/8 297 4.95 5th round

NFL comparison: Keith Hamilton, Giants Strengths: Has excellent size and moves well. More aggressive last season; finally showed signs of being physical presence in middle. Weaknesses: Plays too upright at times and has mental lapses. Sometimes takes poor angles and takes himself out of plays by not using leverage. Notable: Majored in kinesiology. Bottom line: Definitely worth taking in the fifth round. Might be a headache for a coach because he understands his assignments but sometimes just doesn't get them done. Looks the part and is worth the risk. Final grade: 3.1

John Schlecht, Minnesota 6-01/8 277 4.89 6th round

NFL comparison: Ellis Johnson, Colts Strengths: Disruptive player with quick first step. Short, squatty and difficult to run against. Shows good run/pass diagnosis skills. Utilizes good acceleration and is aggressive and intense. Weaknesses: Lacks speed to rush the passer. Doesn't get much penetration. Not as tough at point of attack as he should be-would rather shoot a gap than take on a guy man-to-man. Notable: Strongest player at Minnesota last season (bench 450, squat 600). Bottom line: More of a workout warrior than a great player. Has some upside if he can learn to take his aggressiveness and turn it into more physical play. Final grade: 2.9

Willie Blade, Mississippi State 6-21/2 305 4.95 6th round

NFL comparison: Joe Salave'a, Titans Strengths: Tough player who works hard on every down. Shows more quickness than pure speed and takes good angles to ball. Moves the pile on first contact. A real presence against the run. Could play in a twogap system and take up a lot of space. Weaknesses: Doesn't have good game speed and must use hands better to shed blockers. Has trouble holding off blockers while defending run. Has trouble getting penetration when rushing the passer. Notable: Born in Landustel, Germany. Bottom line: Would do well in two-gap system because he would not have to make plays in backfield. Might keep a roster spot as situational run-stuffer. Final grade: 2.5

Kris Kocurek, Texas Tech 6-4 274 4.93 6th round

NFL comparison: Ernest Grant, Dolphins Strengths: Has good size and is physical. Displays great instincts and is extremely disruptive. Never stops hustling and wears down opponents. Plays with good leverage. Better run-stuffer than pass rusher. Could develop into a situational player on run downs. Weaknesses: Still is recovering from shoulder injury. Must improve upper-body strength. If he is to play in the NFL, he needs to be able to hold up better physically. Notable: Finished second in the state as a senior and third as a junior in high school shot put competition. Bottom line: Has marginal speed, which makes him a non-factor as pass rusher. Needs to show pass-rush skills to move up draft boards. Final grade: 2.0

Others: Cleveland Pinkney, South Carolina, 6-01/4, 292, 5.07 (40 time); Loran Kaiser, Nebraska, 6-0%, 284, 5.10; James Reed, Iowa State, 5-11%, 286, 4.91; John Nix, Southern Mississippi, 6-2, 300, 5.30; Cecil Caldwell, South Carolina, 6-11/4, 275, 4.90; Devonte Peterson, Catawba, 6-23/4, 258, 4.99; Scott Schultz, North Dakota, 6-2¹/₄, 287, 5.04; Eric Downing, Syracuse, $6-2^{7}/8$, 295, 5.05.



INSIDE LINEBACHER

OVERRATED

Zeke Moreno, Southern California

Moses' little brother has talent, but where was he during

UNDERRATED

Matt Smith, Oregon

He's not going to be great in the NFL, but he's tough, smart and consistent.

SLEEPER

Edgerton Hartwell, Western Illinois

This Division I-AA product certainly looks the part, but how will he fare against the best competition?

STOCK ON THE RISE

Torrance Marshall, Oklahoma

Leading the defense of the national champions has something to do with it.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Brandon Spoon, North Carolina

He's always in position, but he may not be able to make enough plays in the NFL.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-2 250 4.60 MINIMUM 5-11 235 4.80

Inside linebackers or middle linebackers often are described as quarterbacks of the defense. Along with physical skills, they must have great leadership qualities, intelligence and instincts. A good inside linebacker must have the ability to first stop the run between the tackles and be able to get off blocks and make plays at the line of scrimmage. They must have the strength to take on blockers and make plays but also the quickness to slide around blocks and chase down ballcarriers. Many successful middle linebackers produce big sack and tackle numbers because they have defensive tackles up front to protect them, allowing them to fly to the ball. Players such as Baltimore's Ray Lewis and Miami's Zach Thomas are examples of the new breed of middle linebackers; players who don't have great size but have the power to stuff the inside run and the athleticism and range to make plays from sideline-to-sideline. Most middle linebackers are not great athletes, though that is changing somewhat. But they are tough, smart, short-range guys who can go all out on first and second down, knowing they probably will be replaced in nickel situations. If the inside/middle linebacker also has the ability to excel in pass coverage (like Lewis), he becomes a premium player because he never has to come out of the game. When a linebacker is versatile and talented enough to play every down, it is much more difficult for offenses to exploit him in passing-game matchups.

here is not a Rob Morris in this group, and certainly not a Brian Urlacher. Frankly, most of these guys will be drafted on the second day, which means few are touted as top 100 prospects.

Carlos Polk is the best of the inside linebackers, but he still needs some refining in coverage and may not be an every-down player for a year. Torrance Marshall has great playmaking skills but still needs to



prove he is a good fit in the middle. Kendrell Bell and Zeke Moreno,

meanwhile, are trying to rebound from below-average senior years.

At this position, there are many questions to be answered and few standouts available.

Carlos Polk, Nebraska 6-21/s 256 4.70 (40 time) 2nd round

NFL comparison: Stephen Boyd, Lions

Vs. inside run: Good size and strength. Can fill hole and take on blockers at the point of attack. Uses outstanding leverage against blockers. Has perfect temperament for middle linebacker and is a big hitter. Grade: 7.0 Vs. outside run: Has good speed and great quickness for inside player. Sideline-to-sideline player who can chase down plays. Sometimes takes bad steps because of mediocre instincts. Grade: 7.4

Blitz/coverage: Madman when he blitzes. Attacks hole with abandon and will collapse the pocket as a bull rusher. Decent in coverage but has the tools to improve. Gets lost in zone coverage at times. Grade: 6.6 Run/pass recognition: This is the biggest area of concern. He's not terrible, but it's what keeps him from being truly great. Grade: 6.1

Pursuit/tackling: Explosive hitter with great acceleration into contact. Takes good angles in pursuit and has the speed to chase from inside. Rarely misses an opportunity to

make a play. Grade: 6.9 Notable: Had a career-best 17 tackles against Kansas State last season.

Bottom line: A late-first round prospect who could slip to second round because he lacks some basic instincts. Final grade: 6.8

Kendrell Bell, Georgia 6-11/2 240 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: Junior Seau, Chargers

Vs. inside run: More of active chaser than runstuffer, but he's powerful as tackler. Does good job of avoiding traffic. Needs to improve ability to take on blocks. Grade: 6.1

Vs. outside run: Sideline-to-

sideline player who will outrun play at times. A bit out of control, but an explosive tackler with good power, speed and burst.

Blitz/coverage: Tremendous threat on blitz. Shows great instincts, acceleration and speed. Has big-play flair but is liability in coverage. Not real disciplined and misses assignments. Grade: 6.0

Run/pass recognition: Type of guy you just have to cut loose. He's better when he plays with instincts and doesn't have a lot of mental responsibilities. Grade: 5.4 Pursuit/tackling: Rare to see a middle line-

backer with this much chase ability. Sure tackler with explosive power. Grade: 7.2 Notable: Blocked six kicks in last two sea-

Bottom line: Gifted as any college linebacker but tends to get out of position and take false steps, especially in coverage. Still a good prospect because of raw talent and playmaking ability. Final grade: 6.3



GOING UP: Few players have improved more in the past year than Oklahoma's Marshall (10).

Zeke Moreno, Southern California 6-13/4 238 4.75 3rd round

NFL comparison: Ted Johnson, Patriots Strengths: Has all the intangibles. Could play all three linebacker positions but fits best inside. Has above-average size and good speed and athleticism. Makes a lot of plays on the move and is a big-time hitter. Coverage skills are improving. Weaknesses: Potential is a bit limited. Doesn't have great strength and could wear down playing inside. Needs to improve blitzing and coverage skills. Notable: His mother, Arcinia Arenas, played fullback and linebacker in a San Diego women's tackle football league. Bottom line: Playmaker with good intangibles. Ability to play all three linebacker spots is bonus. Doesn't have a lot of upside but is very reliable. Final grade: 5.8

Torrance Marshall, Oklahoma 6-2 245 4.70 3rd round

NFL comparison: Al Wilson, Broncos Strengths: Elite athlete. Showed great improvement in instincts and run/pass recognition in senior year. Excellent straight-line speed and could play some outside linebacker or as third-down specialist... Weaknesses: Has decent strength but has some trouble holding ground at point. Instincts are lacking. Tends to free-lance, instead of reading and reacting to play. Notable: MVP of Sooners' Orange Bowl win over Florida State. Bottom line: Improved his stock significantly during senior year, but questions remain about ability to pick up schemes and make proper decisions. Final grade: 5.5

Edgerton Hartwell, Western Illinois 6-0% 238 4.76 3rd round

NFL comparison: Marvcus Patton, Chiefs Strengths: Very active. Does a nice job navigating traffic sideline-to-sideline. Fights through blocks inside. Shows good instincts and technique in coverage. Has tremendous off-field work ethic. Will play through pain. Weaknesses: Lacks size and quickness. Strength is somewhat suspect. How will he hold up against big-time competition? Relies more on mind than physical ability to make plays. Notable: Won the Buck Buchanan Award, given to top defensive player in Division I-AA, last season. Bottom line: Throwback type who looks the part in terms of build and movement. Bit of a project and may only contribute on special teams as a rookie. Final grade: 5.0

Brian Allen, Florida State 6-01/4 233 4.56 4th round

NFL comparison: Brian Simmons, Bengals Strengths: Very mobile and active. Has great speed and plays hard. Stronger than size indicates. Has great natural strength (can bench press almost 500 pounds) and holds up well against lead blockers. Physically, he's a first-round pick. Weaknesses: A bit undersized and will get run over by bigger blockers. Needs to improve coverage technique but has tools to be coached. Notable: First cousin of former Seminole and current Bengals end Reinard Wilson. Bottom line: Versatility is major plus-has played strongside and middle linebacker and has speed to play on weak side. Has explosive tools, but height limits his potential. Final grade: 4.8

Brandon Spoon, North Carolina 6-21/2 247 4.80 4th round

NFL comparison: Greg Biekert, Raiders Strengths: Tremendous worker who spends a lot of time in weight and video rooms. Good size, but speed is average. Flows well to ball, and rarely takes a poor angle. Technically sound player. Weaknesses: History of biceps problems. Not pure athlete but has made himself into player.

Struggles in coverage because of limited change-of-direction skills. Doesn't have great lower-body strength and will have trouble stuffing run. Notable: Wants to become an FBI agent. Bottom line: Not one of the more gifted players in the class but is one of its more consistent ones. Final grade: 4.5

Matt Smith, Oregon 6-3% 251 5.00 4th round

NFL comparison: John Holecek, Bills Strengths: Extremely coordinated athlete with good change-of-direction skills. Loves to compete. Above-average run/pass recognition skills. Excels at covering short-tointermediate pass routes. Weaknesses: On the slow side. Tends to be inconsistent as tackler. Range is suspect. Notable: Hit .243 with 17 homers and 165 RBIs in five seasons of minor league baseball. Bottom line: Decided to walk on at Oregon in 1998 after concluding baseball career. Turns 25 in June and knows game but hasn't reached potential. Player to watch. Final grade: 4.1

Cornelius Anthony, Texas A&M 5-11% 226 4.70 5th round

NFL comparison: London Fletcher, Rams Strengths: Plays bigger than size. Extremely aggressive and physical against run. Never stops hustling. Demonstrates good field presence and instincts. Nose for the ball. Weaknesses: Undersized. Marginal speed and quickness. Needs to take better angles to ball. Struggles to get deep enough in coverage. Notable: Had 18-tackle game against Nebraska in 1999. Bottom line: Instincts and attitude allow him to survive because he doesn't have good, size, speed or mobility. Blue-collar player whose lack of mobility will be exposed in the NFL. Final grade: 3.7

T.J. Turner, Michigan State 6-21/8 252 4.80 5th round

NFL comparison: Marvin Jones, Jets Strengths: Great size. Moves well in straight line and plays well in space. Competes with non-stop hustle and tackles well. Plays with great toughness. Weaknesses: Too aggressive at times. Overruns plays. Instincts are subpar. Slow to read and react to plays. Has trouble dropping into coverage. Notable: Four-year starter on offense and defense in high school; helped team to cumulative record of 37-3. Bottom line: Turner played every linebacker position in college, and that versatility should get him on field early in pro career. Final grade: 3.4

Ryan Goven, North Dakota 6-3% 259 4.82 5th round

NFL comparison: Ken Norton, Free agent Strengths: Impressive size and plays aggressively. Always around the ball. Holds ground at point of attack and contains plays. Disciplined. Competes with non-stop hustle. Very fluid for size. Weaknesses: Overall athletic ability is in question. A step slow.

Small-school label doesn't help. Gets lost in coverage. Notable: Likes riding horses in spare time. Bottom line: Needs to improve coverage skills to get playing time as rookie. Final grade: 3.2

Rick Crowell, Colorado State 6-3 245 4.85 6th round

NFL comparison: Larry Izzo, Dolphins Strengths: Has good size and has worked to become powerful tackler with better-thanaverage strength. Intense player with nasty streak. Makes a lot of plays on hustle. Never out of position and rarely takes false step. Weaknesses: Lacks athleticism. Not real quick or fast. Liability in coverage and doesn't offer much as blitzer. Notable: Despite missing a game last season, had 32 more tackles than CSU's No. 2 tackler. Bottom line: Player coaches want on roster, but they'll need to find a spot for him. Hustle and intensity should make him good special teams player and reserve, but there is little upside. Final grade: 2.6

J.J. Jones, Arkansas 6-01/4 232 4.63 6th round

NFL comparison: Bernardo Harris, Packers Strengths: Good speed, mobility and instincts. Excels at run/pass diagnosis. Good ability to navigate traffic and make plays sideline-to-sideline. Technically sound player who rarely takes false step. Weaknesses: Has trouble plugging holes. Gets knocked back at point of attack. Needs to add weight. Coverage skills are improving. Must play more physical. Notable: Granted extra year of eligibility from the NCAA after missing almost all of '99 with broken hand. Bottom line: Inconsistent in 2000 but runs well, has a decent frame and is a technically sound prospect. Final grade: 2.4

Josh Lowe, Brigham Young 6-11/2 244 4.70 6th round

NFL comparison: T.J. Slaughter, Jaguars Strengths: Exceptionally quick first step. Comfortable dropping in coverage, and can cover a lot of ground. Shows good changeof-direction skills. Has good size and quickness to fill gaps. Holds ground at point of attack. Weaknesses: Poor lateral movement. Has tendency to get caught in traffic. Doesn't have good peripheral vision. Has history of back problems. Is 25. Notable: Served on Mormon mission to Russia. Bottom line: With more game experience, ability to navigate traffic should improve. Could be valuable special teams player because of straight-line speed. Final grade: 2.3

Others: Alex Lincoln, Auburn, 6-0, 233, 4.59 (40 time); Kris Micheaux, Baylor, 6-0, 260, 4.90; Kautai Olevao, Utah, 6-13, 265, 4.91; Merceda Perry, North Carolina, 6-0½, 241, 4.73; Cameron Saulsby, Northern Illinois, 5-11¾, 237, 4.70; Edward Reese, Jackson State, 6-1, 242, 4.91; Wayne Rogers, Houston, 6-14, 232, 4.85.

TSN PLAYER BATINGS

OUTSIDE LINEBACHERS

OVERRATED

Markus Steele, Southern California

His production tailed off last season, and his ability to play under control is now being questioned.

UNDERRATED

Orlando Huff, Fresno State

With a year of coaching, this guy could start for a lot of NFL teams.

SLEEPER

Byron Thweatt, Virginia

Never fulfilled his potential in college because of injuries, but he played through the pain and now is recovered.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Quinton Caver, Arkansas

Has all the physical tools to dominate in the NFL—he just needs time and a patient team.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Morlon Greenwood, Syracuse

Has some nice attributes—notably speed—but his lack of size will limit his playing time in NFL.
 JOB REQUIREMENTS
 Ht. Wt. 40
 H

In 4-3 defenses, outside linebackers must be good athletes who can play in space. They have considerable coverage responsibilities, requiring the athletic ability to drop into zones and cover running backs out of the backfield. They must have good hips and flexibility and the speed and range to chase down plays from sideline to sideline. Most do not spend a lot of time rushing the quarterback, though they occasionally will be used to blitz in special defenses. If they do have pass-rushing skills, they easily could evolve into a nickel pass rusher in certain situations. Outside linebackers also must be solid open-field tacklers and have the ability to get off blocks and flow to the play. There are few outside linebackers in the NFL who can do it all. That's why big-time outside 'backers get big-time salaries. Size is not an overriding factor at this position. A player like Tampa Bay's Derrick Brooks, for example, isn't real big, but he is strong and a great athlete. In 3-4 schemes, outside linebackers are the primary pass rushers. They have very little coverage responsibility and are usually upfield guys who can beat offensive linemen with their guickness. Many times, these players were defensive ends in college who are undersized in a 4-3 but have excellent pass-rush ability. Defensive coordinators will adjust their scheme to fit their personnel. For example, Jevon Kearse isn't a true 4-3 end, but the Titans would be wasting him as a drop linebacker, so they devise schemes that allow him to be primarily a pass rusher and a chase guy.

ifferent teams rate Dan Morgan at different positions. We feel he's best suited to play outside, but some teams like him inside and still others believe he could play defensive end. Morgan alone makes the outside linebacker class respectable.

After him, there are five or six players who should be drafted in the second and third rounds, but one or two (such as Tommy Polley) could sneak into the first because of





team needs. But Morgan is the only legitimate firstround linebacker in this class.

Polley is a bit undersized but a great athlete. Quinton Caver and Markus Steele are great athletes who may lack the discipline and know-how at this point to get the job done. And Jamie Winborn and Keith Adams are underclassmen with limited experience.

*Denotes underclassman.

Dan Morgan, Miami (Fla.) 6-2½ 235 4.55 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Zach Thomas, Dolphins

Vs. inside run: Undersized but covers with great quickness and instinct. Will get taken out of plays if offensive linemen catch him, which rarely happens. Don't mistake his lack of size for lack of power. Grade: 7.2

Vs. outside run: Quick, active and explosive. Does a great job of finding the ball. Instincts are outstanding. Doesn't use his hands well to shed blockers. Gets caught in traffic at times.

Grade: 7.8

Blitz/coverage: Excellent blitz instincts. Has feel for when and what gaps will open. Not a threat to bull-rush if picked up by lineman or back. Quick and sneaky as blitzer. Needs to improve coverage skills. Grade: 7.5

Run/pass recognition: Great feel for position and rarely takes false step. Does excellent job of reading and reacting. Grade: 7.8

Pursuit/tackling: Best characteristic. Doesn't have best speed among linebackers but over-

comes limitations with quickness and by taking perfect angles. Grade: 7.8

Notable: In 1997, became the first true freshman to start at linebacker for Miami since Ray Lewis in '93.

Bottom line: Though Morgan is a bit of a 'tweener, there is no doubt he will be a star. Has rare instincts and all of the intangibles. **Final grade: 7.6**

Tommy Polley, Florida State 6-3½ 225 4.55 1st round

NFL comparison: Jevon Kearse, Titans

Vs. inside run: Will shed blocks and make a lot of plays when he closes down, but he won't stack up at the point of attack well in NFL. Grade: 5.8

Vs. outside run: Very active. Has great speed, athleticism and instincts. Makes a lot of plays upfield. Is disruptive, plays sideline to sideline and has a lot of big-play potential. Grade: 7.7 Blitz/coverage: Didn't cover much at FS, but showed skills at Senior Bowl. Quick first step and explosive moves. Punishing tackler. Could be elite pass-rush linebacker in NFL. Grade: 7.6 Run/pass recognition: Needs work in this area, but he's a heady player. Doesn't take a lot of false steps but tends to get out of position by getting too far upfield. Grade: 6.5

Pursuit/tackling: Excellent on the chase and will cause fumbles with tomahawk move from blind side. Classic big playmaker with solid tackling skills. **Grade: 7.4**

Notable: Was considered a top-60 basketball prospect coming out of high school.

Bottom line: He doesn't play end and isn't as gifted as Kearse, but it's hard not to compare the two when watching Polley. If he bulks up, he has a chance to be Pro Bowl player. Final grade: 7.0

Markus Steele, Southern California 6-2¾ 225 4.50 2nd round

NFL comparison: Keith Bulluck, Titans
Vs. inside run: More of a weakside linebacker
but has shown ability to use hands and



LOT TO LIKE: Whether he plays inside or out in the NFL, Morgan seems destined to be a star.

strength to shed and make plays inside. Will mix it up. Grade: 6.2

Vs. outside run: Shows good instincts, strength and range. Likes to play in space and does a nice job of taking on blocks and getting to ballcarrier. Impressive quickness and change of direction. Grade: 7.2

Blitz/coverage: Has potential as pass rusher, but he's an established cover guy. Can match up against backs, tight ends and even receivers. Needs to work at rushing passer.

Grade: 7.0

Run/pass recognition: Instincts are fine and recognition ability continues to improve.

Grade: 6.9

Pursuit/tackling: Great in pursuit but needs to be better tackler. Often makes an incredible play just by getting in position, then ruins it by missing tackle. **Grade: 5.7**

Notable: Wore same number at USC (55) as Junior Seau, Willie McGinest and Chris Claiborne.

Bottom line: Has all the tools to be great. Athlete who is developing into a football player. Final grade: 6.6

Jamie Winborn, Vanderbilt* 6-0 235 4.62 2nd round

NFL comparison: Derrick Brooks, Buccaneers

Vs. inside run: A bit of a 'tweener who could play inside or out, but we think he's a better fit outside. Very active and will make a lot of plays with quickness. Grade: 6.1

Vs. outside run: Reads, reacts, sheds and makes plays on the run. Great range. Has ability to dominate matchups against tight ends. Makes a lot of plays in backfield. Grade: 7.3

Blitz/coverage: Looks unnatural in coverage, especially on drops. Needs to work on technique. Can be good pass rusher, but it's more his style to roam near the line and make plays upfield. Grade: 5.8

Run/pass recognition: Great natural instincts but needs to be taught what to do with them. Never been asked to play in coverage and has never been a pure rush linebacker. Grade: 6.1 Pursuit/tackling: Making plays in space is strong suit. Needs to improve overall tackling but much better in pursuit in open field than in structured situation. Grade: 6.7

Notable: Was suspended for two games last season for taking a line of credit from a bank, a violation of NCAA rules.

Bottom line: Exciting prospect because of his natural skills and athleticism. Has all the intangibles. Final grade: 6.4

Quinton Caver, Arkansas 6-41/8 230 4.70 2nd round

NFL comparison: Chris Claiborne, Lions Vs. inside run: Played inside in college but projects outside. Doesn't stack up well against run inside, as he is a bit light. Grade: 5.9

Vs. outside run: He's tall but runs well and knows how to use hands to shed. Good range and better quickness. Makes a lot of plays in space. Grade: 6.9

Blitz/coverage: Lacks experience in passing game. Has speed to match up man-to-man, but he's a bit stiff and doesn't always recognize what's coming. Needs to work on blitz technique. Grade: 6.1

Run/pass recognition: Needs some work here, especially with his move to outside. Has improved his technique and knows what to look for. Grade: 5.7

Pursuit/tackling: Great in space and is a wrapup tackler. For a guy with such explosive power, he doesn't make a lot of bone-crushing hits. Grade: 6.8

Notable: Likes rap, rhythm and blues and soul

Bottom line: More of a big-time prospect than a big-time player. Has potential to be dominating but will need some time to learn and mature.

Final grade: 6.3

Keith Adams, Clemson* 5-11 223 4.85 3rd round

NFL comparison: Dwayne Rudd, Vikings

Strengths: Exceptional speed and agility. Great range and uses his hands well to get through traffic. Does remarkable job of slipping blocks and filling gaps for his size. Capable in coverage. Weaknesses: A bit undersized and could struggle to shed bigger linemen. More of a threat as blitzer inside than outside. Notable: Son of Julius, who played defensive end for 16 seasons with the Patriots. Bottom line: Has knack for making plays. A bit undersized but makes up for it with outstanding speed, great strength and quickness. Final grade: 5.7

Jason Glenn, Texas A&M 6-01/2 231 4.74 3rd round

NFL comparison: Joey Porter, Steelers

Strengths: Hard-nosed and intense. Never stops hustling and is extremely competitive. Plays bigger than his size. Has surprising game speed and quick first step. Weaknesses: Rarely has worked in coverage as linebacker, though he began college career as safety. Notable: Brother of Jets corner Aaron Glenn. Bottom line: Suffered rupture of a lateral tendon and the lateral collateral ligament in left knee toward the end of last season. If healthy, could make an immediate impact as a situational pass rusher. Final grade: 5.5

Morlon Greenwood, Syracuse 6-0 231 4.65 3rd round

NFL comparison: James Farrior, Jets Strengths: Fast, quick athlete with strength and power. Great speed as pass rusher. Makes plays

on the run and has explosive power. May be better off as rush linebacker in 3-4. Weaknesses: Better athlete than football player. Never has developed instincts or feel for position. Takes a lot of false steps, which cause him to get out of position or come up short of making a play. Notable: One of 11 kids; born in Jamaica. Bottom

line: Impressive athlete who turns heads during workouts but lack of size and football intellect will cost him on draft day. Seems to be a second late on a lot of plays. Final grade: 5.3

Orlando Huff, Fresno State 6-21/8 234 4.80 3rd round

NFL comparison: Eddie Robinson, Titans Strengths: Good size and strength. Reliable against run. Navigates traffic well. Weaknesses: Only marginal speed and quickness. Must improve coverage skills. Lacks good instincts; needs to spend more time in the video room. Notable: Two-time All-WAC first-team performer. Bottom line: Big knock on Huff is he takes too many false steps and thus gets beat in coverage. But NFL coaches say they can correct the problem. Final grade: 5.0

Sedrick Hodge, North Carolina 6-31/2 230 4.42 4th round

NFL comparison: Jamie Sharper, Ravens

Strengths: Has track-like speed and linebacker's body. Gifted athlete with rare speed, quickness and leaping ability. Chases down a lot of plays. Should be great in coverage. Weaknesses: Needs to add some strength and be more physical. Also needs to improve his run/pass recognition time. Notable: Won 100 and 200 meters at state high school track meet in 1997. Bottom

line: Risky pick because he is more of an athlete than trained football player. That said, he has great upside and could sneak into the first day of the draft. Final grade: 4.9

Eric Westmoreland, Tennessee 6-0% 235 4.70 4th round

NFL comparison: Tedy Bruschi, Patriots

Strengths: Extremely active with great mobility. Plays bigger than size and faster than 40 time. Enough lower-body strength to hold up against the run. Tremendous nose for ball and is rarely out of position. Weaknesses: Undersized and lacks great straight-line speed. Notable: Fouryear starter who led high school teams to three state titles and an overall record of 56-1. Bottom line: Played strongside linebacker in college but probably will be moved to weak side because of height. Doesn't have great measurables but is playmaker with great quickness and

Roylin Bradley, Texas A&M 6-1 234 4.70 4th round

NFL comparison: DaShon Polk, Bills

explosiveness. Final grade: 4.6

Strengths: Great athlete who comes hard off the edge when rushing passer. Has footwork and quick hands to beat blockers in open field. Weaknesses: Isn't much of a factor in coverage because usually rushed passer in college. Needs to play with more discipline. Tends to overrun plays. Likes to play finesse game; needs to toughen up. Notable: Was a two-time Class 4A defensive player of the year in Texas. Bottom line: Because Bradley mostly is a situational pass rusher, look for him to go late in fourth round to team that plays 3-4 scheme. Final grade: 4.4

Jeremiah Pharms, Washington 6-0 251 4.81 4th round

NFL comparison: Rahim Abdullah, Browns Strengths: Has good speed and is aggressive. Rushes the passer quickly off corner. Has a quick burst, which leads to a lot of tackles. Very good in pursuit and great acceleration. Good change-of-direction skills. Weaknesses: Needs to take on blockers better. Durability is questionable. Despite his bulk, gets taken out of plays when teams run at him. Notable: Has three kids: Jeremiah, Jasmine and Angelique. Bottom line: Began last season a little overrated and has dropped on some boards. Plays hard and loves to hit but doesn't stand out in any area. Final grade: 4.1

Patrick Chukwurah, Wyoming 6-1% 233 4.60 5th round

NFL comparison: Steve Foley, Bengals

Strengths: Gifted athlete who can cover a lot of ground. Has speed and ability to get upfield and create havoc in backfield. Has developed into good outside pass rusher. Weaknesses: Sometimes has trouble diagnosing plays. Has tendency to freelance and get caught out of position. Doesn't possess good instincts. Notable: Born in Nigeria and grew up in Irving, Texas. Bottom line: Outside pass rusher who doesn't have the size to be everydown player. Final grade: 3.8

Quinton Caver

Depending on who you talk to, there are different reasons to love Arkansas linebacker Quinton Caver. For pro scouts, it's Caver's perfect frame—at 6-41/8, 230 pounds, he has the ideal body type for an NFL linebacker. Caver also has unusually long arms and great sideline-to-sideline speed. "He was the best-looking player at the Senior Bowl at his position," says Todd McShay of The War Room, which analyzes NFL personnel and college prospects for The Sporting News. "People (there) were amazed with his size, speed and power."

Caver's former coaches at Arkansas love his measurables, but they would rather talk about him as a person. "He's just one of the best kids I have ever coached," says Razorbacks coach Houston Nutt. "He led by example every day he was here. A quiet leader. A 'Yes, sir,' 'No, sir' kid. His teammates absolutely love him."

"He just plays his heart out," says co-defensive coordinator and linebackers coach Bobby Allen. "A great kid to coach."

Playing last season at middle linebacker, Caver made 91 tackles, including 10 for losses. But it is Caver's knack for making big plays that excites scouts. For example, he made three tackles at the 1-yard line as Mississippi State attempted to score in overtime, capping a game in which Caver had two sacks and blocked a field-goal try. "(Caver) was our Ray Lewis," Allen says. "We counted on him making the big plays—the need plays—for us."

Consider, too, that Caver didn't have the luxury of settling in at one position in college. "When we first got here in 1998, (previous) coach (Danny) Ford had him playing rush end," Nutt says. "And when we looked at film of him as a freshman, the thing you noticed was that he was always around the ball, making plays. We wanted him to get him more involved, so we moved him to linebacker."

But not to outside linebacker, which seemed to be the best fit for his size. Caver went to the middle, where he had the chance to make the most plays. "It didn't bother me," Caver says. "I was ready to play anywhere the coaches wanted to put me."

Good thing, because in the NFL, he probably will play on the outside, over the tight end.

"I picture him as a prototypical strongside linebacker in man-to-man press on the line," Allen says. "He can just cover so much ground. I used to call him 'Range Rover' because of his size and speed. Some NFL coach is going to love this guy." —Eric Edholm

Byron Thweatt, Virginia 6-2 229 4.70 5th round

NFL comparison: Winfred Tubbs, 49ers

Strengths: Tough, smart player. Most of his success against the run can be attributed to ability to stay low and use good leverage to shed blockers. Collects interceptions and fumbles by being in right place at right time. Weaknesses: Long history of stingers (pinched nerves) in left shoulder and arm. At times, tends to absorb rather than attack blocks. Notable: Attended same high school and college as Jets linebacker James Farrior. Bottom line: Has size, toughness and heart that scouts and coaches love. But he didn't answer many questions during all-star games. Final grade: 3.7

Mike Young, Illinois 6-1½ 229 4.85 5th round

NFL comparison: Robert Jones, Dolphins
Strengths: Solid athletic ability. Plays well in space and is good tackler. Smooth player who is tough to fool. Shows great instincts. Weaknesses: A bit on slow side and also could add some weight. Excelled in coverage in college but may have trouble with the speed of NFL. Lack of size will hurt him against the run. Notable: Helped high school team to 34-2 record in final three seasons. Bottom line: Just average in terms of athletic ability but does make plays. Final grade: 3.4

Anthony Denman, Notre Dame 6-1½ 229 4.75 5th round

NFL comparison: lan Gold, Broncos
Strengths: Decent athletic ability and adequate speed. Tremendous ability to find ball and attack. Aggressive and chases down many plays.
Weaknesses: Lacks quickness and change-of-direction skills. Has tendency to get caught out of position and miss assignments. Has trouble in coverage. Notable: Played quarterback, running back, fullback, linebacker and defensive line in

high school. **Bottom line:** Played a lot of middle linebacker in college but will end up outside in NFL. Player to keep an eye on because of ability to make plays. **Final grade: 3.0**

18 Chaz Murphy, Kansas 6-31/8 240 4.66 6th round

NFL comparison: Mike Vrabel, Steelers
Strengths: Great size and speed. Can get
upfield. Shows ability to counter blockers'
techniques in pass rush. Uses hands well to
shed or control blockers. Weaknesses: Needs
to improve strength and improve against run.
Raw in coverage. Notable: Had 25 sacks in
two seasons at Garden City (Kan.) CC. Bottom
line: Best suited to play in 3-4 as a rush linebacker. Final grade: 2.7

Anthony Sessions, Tennessee 6-1 220 4.50 6th round

NFL comparison: Corey Moore, Bills

Strengths: Quick, fast and active. Has speed to match up in coverage and also shows potential as pass rusher. Gets upfield in a hurry and has big-play flair. Weaknesses: Liability against run. Will only be able to play on obvious passing downs. Very raw. Notable: Played quarterback and linebacker in high school. Bottom line: Will contribute on passing downs and on special teams, but that's about it. Final grade: 2.6

Chris Edmonds, West Virginia 6-3% 240 4.65 6th round

NFL comparison: Adrian Ross, Bengals
Strengths: Impressive size and speed. Has
exceptionally quick first step. Nice ability to
change direction. Weaknesses: Needs to develop
better feel for coverage and will have to close
on ball quicker in NFL. Average athlete who
needs to improve run/pass diagnosis skills.
Notable: Discovered in gym class by his high
school football coach, who convinced him to try
out for team. Bottom line: A project who is best

suited to role as pass-rushing specialist. **Final grade: 2.5**

Clayton White, North Carolina State 5-11% 225 4.71 7th round

NFL comparison: Keith Brooking, Falcons
Strengths: Former strong safety has speed and quickness to cover. Very physical and plays with toughness. Never stops hustling.
Weaknesses: Lacks size to play outside. Needs to add bulk to frame without taking anything away from speed and quickness. Notable: Made the ACC All-Academic team last season.
Bottom line: Instinctive player who likes to throw his body around. Sheds blockers well but will be overmatched in NFL as everydown player. Most likely a special teams player only. Final grade: 1.9

22 Kevin Rollins, Toledo 6-0% 230 4.69 7th round

NFL comparison: Reinard Wilson, Bengals
Strengths: Intelligent player who doesn't make
many mistakes. Aggressive against run. Good
quickness as pass rusher. A former end, he has
developed nice pass-rush moves. Weaknesses:
Played only one season at linebacker. Not
mobile in coverage. Only adequate athletic ability. Notable: Has volunteered for Habitat for
Humanity, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and as an
elementary school tutor. Bottom line: Good
straight-line speed but lacks change-of-direction
skills. Lack of experience at position concerns
scouts. Final grade: 1.7

Others: Josh Stamer, South Dakota, 6-2½, 220, 4.70 (40 time); Ben Mezera, Minnesota, 6-3¾, 234, 4.86; Karim Grant, Acadia (Nova Scotia, Canada), 6-4½, 231, 4.65; Matt Stewart, Vanderbilt, 6-4, 220, 4.75; Roger Knight, Wisconsin, 6-0½, 224, 4.83; John Norman, Texas Tech, 6-0½, 219, 4.60; Lyle Weaver, Army, 5-107%, 231, 4.70; LeVar Woods, Iowa, 6-2¼, 234, 4.79.



CORNERBACH

OVERRATED

Jimmy Williams, Vanderbilt

Until he decides he wants to work at it, he will never achieve his potential.

UNDERRATED

Dwight Smith, Akron

Don't underestimate his ability to cover the bigger and taller receivers.

SLEEPER

Ligarius Jennings, Tennessee State

With good size and great coverage skills, he is this year's quiet star.

STOCK ON THE RISE

William Peterson, Western Illinois

The former Michigan Wolverine still has the tools and seems to have cleaned up his act.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Ken Lucas, Mississippi

His disastrous performance in the Music City Bowl has led to a lot of questions.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-1 205 4.40 MINIMUM

Playing cornerback has become a very tough job in the NFL because of the increasing number of big and physical wide receivers. Obviously, a corner must have pure speed, but quickness and good feet are almost as important. And the ability to backpedal and turn his hips in man-to-man situations is critical. A good corner must have great hips and flexibility, and also show a quick burst and explosion to the ball—as scouts call it, the ability to close. Reading a receiver's routes, reading the quarterback and getting a great jump on the ball all are attributes that add to success. An NFL corner needs to be somewhat physical and at least an adequate tackler. If forced to make a choice, however, a team would probably live with liabilities in run support if that corner had the cover skills. Size is becoming more of a factor, especially in the red zone, because big receivers can take advantage of a small corner in a mismatch. Seattle's Shawn Springs, Baltimore's Chris McAlister and Oakland's Charles Woodson are good examples of big, athletic corners who can match up physically with the top wide receivers, and play both the pass and the run. An NFL corner also must be confident and cocky. No matter how good he is, he will be beaten occasionally and he must have the ability to bounce back mentally. There have been many cornerbacks in the NFL with a lot of skills who never played up to their potential because they spent too much time worrying about the previous play.

n terms of rating the players from top to bottom, this is clearly the most difficult position to scout in the 2001 draft.

The underclassmen infusion, which includes Jamar Fletcher, Nate Clements, William Peterson, Willie Middlebrooks and Alex Ardley, makes for a deep and moderately talented group of cornerbacks. From Fred Smoot to Bhawoh Jue, there is little that separates the top 10 players. There isn't a



Charles Woodson or Champ Bailey at the top of this class, but what it

offers is quality players in the third and fourth rounds.

The trend that continually sets in on draft day with a deep class such as this is complacency. Teams feel the quality players in deep positions will be around later in the draft, which causes a slippery-slope effect. That's why there's a good chance that some of these talented players will fall much farther than they should.

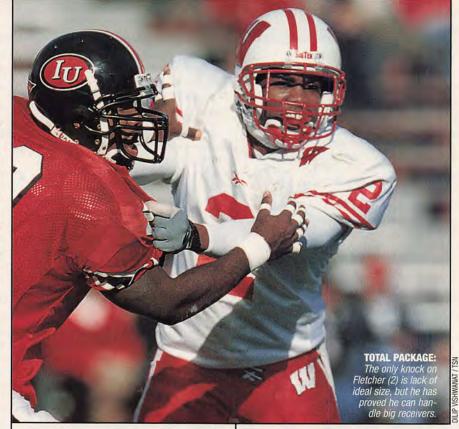
*Denotes underclassman.

Fred Smoot, Mississippi State 5-111/4 175 4.44 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Deion Sanders, Redskins Coverage skills: Extremely fluid as an athlete. Quick. Shows tremendous body control and excellent reflexes. Has best pure coverage skills of any player in the class. Lacks some size, however, which may make him vulnerable against bigger receivers. But he hasn't shown such vulnerability. Grade: 7.9

Run/pass diagnose: Doesn't care much about the run, which basically tells the story. Won't get beat by play-action and will stick with receiver even when everyone in the stadium knows it's a running play. Grade: 7.5

Closing speed: Seems to have that special burst. Runs only a respectable 40 time, but is as fast as he needs to be. Will take chances, which is part of his lure, but they



are calculated chances and he knows how to recover. Grade: 7.8

Ball skills: Playmaker with impressive leaping ability. Goes up and catches the ball at its highest point. Knows how to get position on receiver and shows excellent hands when battling for ball. Grade: 7.9

Run support: Much like Sanders in this area. As aggressive and arrogant as he is in coverage, is exact opposite against the run. It's almost as if he has decided that he doesn't need to be part of run defense-and he's candid about it. Grade: 6.3

Notable: Defensed 24 passes last season, the second-highest total of any college player. Bottom line: Type of player you want in your secondary. Easily shakes off bad plays. One of the more confident players to come out of college in recent years. Skills as cover corner are undeniable. The concern is he doesn't get involved in run support, and some scouts question whether he's coachable. The team that puts up with his mouth and lets him do what he does best in one-on-one coverage will get the last laugh.

Final grade: 7.5

2 Jamar Fletcher, Wisconsin* 5-10 171 4.46 1st round

NFL comparison: Champ Bailey, Redskins
Coverage skills: The complete package,
minus the size. Quick, fast, aggressive, confident. Has great sense for passing game. Plays
bigger than his size and is stronger than
most players his size. Blanketed 6-2 David
Terrell and basically shut out the Michigan
wideout in game last season. No question
that Fletcher can hold his own against the
NFL's bigger receivers. Grade: 7.8

Run/pass diagnose: Tough player to trick. Knows his position and keys to read. Technically sound and works in film room—and it shows on field. Errs on side of caution in terms of leaving his man to defend the run, but that's better than giving up the big play. Grade: 7.2

Closing speed: Not a track star but can run with most receivers. Works with more of a cushion and rarely lets a guy get behind him. Makes great breaks on short routes.

Grade: 7.6

Ball skills: Natural playmaker with soft hands and outstanding ball skills overall. Lack of height hurts in this area; will not make some plays taller corners might make on jump balls. Grade: 7.6

Run support: Isn't afraid to mix it up, and that's really all you can ask from him. Reminds us a bit of Bailey, who plays bigger than his size and has chip on his shoulder about it. Not a force against the run but certainly not a liability. Grade: 6.8

Notable: Set Big Ten record by returning five interceptions for touchdowns in career.

Bottom line: Has potential to be impact play-

er, and it shouldn't take him long to adjust to NFL. Has all the natural skills. Knows how to bait receivers. Best quality is ability to play a few inches taller than he really is. A certain first-round pick who can cover manto-man and probably will help as a return specialist.

Final grade: 7.4

Nate Clements, Ohio State* 6-0 195 4.45 1st round

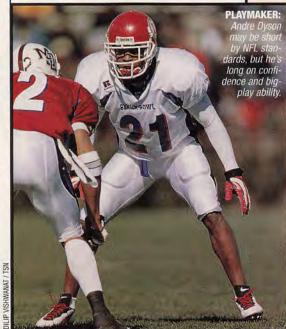
NFL comparison: Chris McAlister, Ravens Coverage skills: Good, not great. Has tremendous size and is learning how to use that to his advantage. Runs with most anyone and has fluid hips for a big corner. Sometimes makes mistakes in judging when to make breaks. Will overcompensate at times and play too soft at other times. Needs to be coached better in this area. Grade: 7.0 Run/pass diagnose: Has had some trouble peeking into backfields. Needs to become more of a student of the game. Tends to rely too much on physical attributes. Grade: 6.3 Closing speed: Has great catchup speed, which bails him out of some sticky situations. Doesn't always get great break on ball, but runs faster than 40-yard time would indicate. One of those rare guys who runs better with pads on. Grade: 7.6

Ball skills: Has tremendous hands and leaping ability. Makes a lot of plays in air and is

not afraid to take chances. True playmaker when it comes to challenging receivers for the ball. **Grade: 7.8**

Run support: Has size and strength to contribute heavily against run but is only moderately interested. Been involved in some good battles, but if not involved in game from coverage standpoint, won't contribute much in run support, either. Grade: 6.4

Notable: Credited with 60 solo tackles and a team-high 13 passes broken up last season.



Bottom line: Big, strong and fast. Nose for ball and inherent range are what make him such a good player. Will get drafted early because of size, but his ball skills will make him a solid pro.

NFL comparison: Mike McKenzie, Packers

Final grade: 7.0

Ken Lucas, Mississippi 6-0¼ 201 4.44 2nd round

Coverage skills: There are valid concerns about his man-to-man skills. Has the size, speed, quickness and strength, but will get beat deep, as seen in Music City Bowl. Will lose concentration at times and allow receiver to get too far behind him or turn him around. A lot of his problems stem from sloppy footwork and technique. Grade: 6.6 Run/pass diagnose: Will show lots of indecision but rarely bites on play-action. Will never abort his post to go stop the run; it's just not his nature. Grade: 6.8 Closing speed: Can absolutely fly for player his size. Has great straight-line speed and makes lots of plays that he shouldn't simply because he has speed to recover. Grade: 7.6 Ball skills: Played receiver before moving to corner in '98, which indicates how good his hands are. Knows how to attack ball. Aggressive and physical when it comes to jump ball. Overall, has a lot of playmaking qualities. Grade: 7.6

SPOTLIGHT

Andre Dyson

Utah cornerback Andre Dyson is used to being picked on. Before older brother Kevin, now a receiver with the Titans, worked on NFL cornerbacks, he worked on Andre.

You can imagine the backyard wars among Andre, Kevin and middle brother Patrick, a safety who started in Utah's secondary last

> season. "We used to go head-tohead a lot, always playing in our yard, in the house, anywhere," Andre says. "Of course, Kevin was older and bigger. I think it made me ready to play in the long run. But before college, he was a free safety and I was the running back, so I got a little beat up."

"It was fun beating up on Andre when we were little," Kevin Dyson says. "Patrick and I would play in the house and take it to him a little. But he was tough."

Naturally, when Kevin (four years older than Andre) and Patrick (two years older) started youth football, Andre wanted in, too. "I was too young, they told me," Andre says. "But I just started playing anyway. I was 5 or 6."

According to Andre, having an older brother in the NFL can be both a blessing and a curse. "On the one hand, (Kevin) has helped me out a ton, like watching game film, filling me in on different players. And just

working against him has helped a bunch," he says. "But on the other hand, people always associate me with him. I want to prove I am my own man."

Some separation began this year. Kevin wasn't the only one to pick on Andre. Utah's opponents threw at him, especially early in the season. The results were mixed. He gave up some big plays, including a couple of touchdown passes. But he also intercepted four passes, returning three of them for touchdowns, and returned a fumble for another TD.

"It was tough early," Andre says. "I was trying to do too much. But then I remembered what Kevin told me about playing at the next level: 'Play your game.' I think I did that and people took notice."

One challenge Andre faces is lack of size. At 5-9%, 175, he is considered small by NFL corner standards. (Patrick is a little bigger, but he isn't considered a top NFL prospect). "I can still make plays," Andre says. "Scouts should see that. I have run a 4.31 40. And I have experience against Kevin, and he's 6-1 and 202."

Would the Dysons be better as teammates or opponents?

"I'd love to have him play with me," Kevin says, "but if there was a better situation somewhere else, I'd want that for him. If he and I were matched up against each other, there's no way I could let him beat me." —Eric Edholm

Run support: Will avoid contact if he can. Tends to absorb hits and shy away from one-on-one collisions. Physical in coverage, but not against run. Grade: 5.8 Notable: Four-time football and baseball letterman in high school.

Bottom line: A first-round risk who might be a second-round steal. Last season, posted five interceptions and school-record 25 passes defended against some of the top receivers in the nation. Not close to being finished product. Has chance to be great but needs to land with great position coach who can teach him footwork and technique. Also needs team that will have patience to develop his skills.

Final grade: 6.9

Will Allen, Syracuse 5-101/4 186 4.40 2nd round

NFL comparison: Ben Kelly, **Dolphins**

Coverage skills: Lot of work to be done in this area, but he's very coachable. Has the best speed of any cornerback in draft-and he's as raw of an athlete as there is. Is improving man-cover skills but is still erratic. Footwork needs to improve. Misses on jam attempts too often in press coverage and doesn't have great feel for coverage as whole. Grade: 6.1

Run/pass diagnose: Not up to level it needs to be. Still peeks too much into backfield and will allow quarterback's motion to dictate his actions, rather than locking onto his man.

Grade: 5.8

Closing speed: Rare. It's what makes him such a coveted prospect. A track star on the football field. Bails himself out time and again by recovering

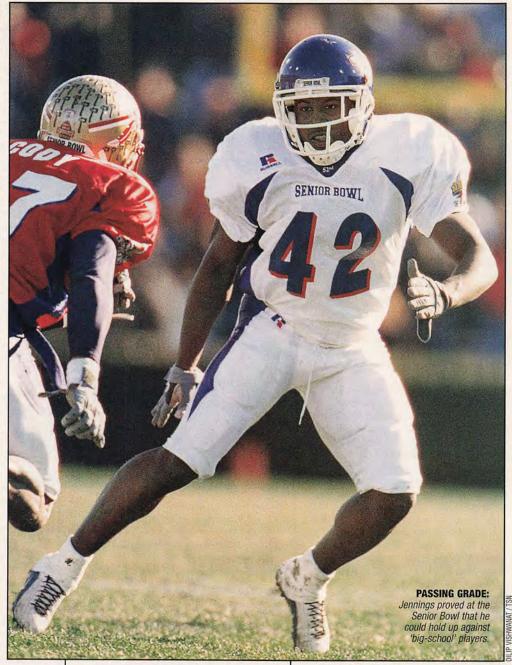
from mistakes with pure speed. Grade: 7.8 Ball skills: Still inconsistent. Misplays ball too often and will let receiver break down his cushion in coverage. Has good leaping ability but often mis-times jumps. Has decent hands. Will have to work diligently in this area.

Grade: 6.2

Run support: Average. When he realizes it's a run, he can track play down with great range. Is physical and aggressive but not overly effective in run support. Grade: 6.1

Notable: Averaged 24.1 yards on 19 kickoff returns last season.

Bottom line: Could go early in draft because of speed alone. Doesn't have great natural coverage skills but improved each year at Syracuse and developed into somewhat of a playmaker. Is threat as kickoff returner-



another reason he probably won't slip beyond second round.

Final grade: 6.4

William Peterson, Western Illinois* 6-1 195 4.45 2nd round

NFL comparison: Samari Rolle, Titans Coverage skills: Size is huge advantage. Fluid athlete who has smooth hips and great change of direction. Knows position, shows great confidence and has developed into physical press corner. Only question now: Will it take him time to readjust to better competition? Grade: 7.3

Run/pass diagnose: Gets sloppy sometimes, and its hurts him. A guy who thinks he has all the answers; his arrogance will cost his team at times. Tends to be overaggressive,

one way or another and will get burned for it in NFL. Grade: 5.5

Closing speed: Good, not great. Quick and fast, but not exceptional in either area. Can run plays down but is not a guy who can recover if he fails to diagnose an out-and-up pattern. Grade: 6.3

Ball skills: Aggressive around ball. Uses size as advantage. Knows how to create separation from receiver and has learned to catch ball at its highest point. Will mis-time some jumps or breaks but is competent in going up

and getting ball in the air. Grade: 6.1 Run support: Aggressive and physical but doesn't always transfer those qualities into his run defense. Potential is there, but doesn't seem interested at times. Grade: 5.4 Notable: Michigan transfer played on school's 1997 national championship team.

Bottom line: One of the three or four most underrated players in this draft. A stud cornerback in terms of physical skills. Can play man coverage and take away one-third of field. History of off-field troubles might cause some teams to let him slide to third round. Final grade: 6.1

Willie Middlebrooks, Minnesota* 6-1 195 4.50 3rd round

NFL comparison: Marcus Coleman, Jets Strengths: Impressive agility, size and strength. Has good build. Improved overall coverage ability in last year at Minnesota. A physical cornerback with the size to take guys out at line of scrimmage. Likes to hit. Still makes some mistakes because of marginal technique and poor footwork, but skills and upside are there. Weaknesses: Sometimes gets lost in coverage. Needs to develop better feel for coverage, especially in zone schemes. Has trouble reacting to receivers' moves and has tendency to take false steps. Really needed one more year of college ball. Notable: Had terrific sophomore season in 1999 but missed the final three games of junior year with an ankle injury. Bottom line: A hard prospect to pass up. Is fluid in movement and makes plays. Has a lot of room for improvement in mental aspect of game. Made lots of mistakes as junior, and his technique is suspect. Talented enough to go in second round, but late-season injury and some questions about his ability to play right away could allow him to slip to third. Final grade: 5.8

Tay Cody, Florida State 5-91/4 173 4.55 3rd round

NFL comparison: Ray Mickens, Jets Strengths: Has adequate speed and knows how to cover. Man-to-man skills are among the best in this draft. Shows great body control, balance and fluid movement. Has good closing speed and appears to make all the right decisions. Has a knack of watching quarterback's eyes and making plays. Weaknesses: On small side and opponents know they can target him with bigger receivers, especially in red zone. Needs to improve ability to press bigger receivers at line. Notable: Four-year starter and only freshman to start on 1997 Florida State team. Bottom line: Constantly makes plays in coverage. Feel for game and confidence are appealing. Pretty much a finished product who could step onto NFL field and play tomorrow. Doesn't have much of an upside, but there isn't much work to do with him. As a short-term solution, especially as a nickel corner, he's your guy. Final grade: 5.7

Andre Dyson, Utah 5-9% 175 4.33 3rd round

NFL comparison: Fernando Bryant, Jaguars Strengths: Playmaker on defense and special teams who has nose for ball. A quick, fast athlete with good man-to-man coverage skills. Has outstanding closing speed and does great job of turning hips and running. Fluid in and out of cuts. Above-average instincts and reflexes. Would be rated much higher if not

for his size limitations. Weaknesses: Gets pushed around some by bigger, more physical receivers. Somewhat of a liability in red zone. Never will be a force against run despite willingness to mix it up. Notable: Younger brother of Titans wide receiver Kevin Dyson. Bottom line: Pure and fluid athlete who always seems to be around ball. Won't be top pick because of size but could contribute immediately as a rookie. Has confidence and is a natural athlete. Final grade: 5.4

Bhawoh Jue, Penn State 6-01/2 190 4.50 3rd round

NFL comparison: Kenny Wright, Vikings Strengths: Great strength and size. Runs well. Likes to hit and will come up to play run. Scouts love his awareness. Is a team leader, even though he started only one year at Penn State. Rated this high because of size, but he can cover and should be able to dominate matchups at line of scrimmage. Weaknesses: Raw. Struggles with intricacies of coverage schemes. Often gives receivers too much cushion. Needs to use size to take receivers out of routes. Needs to improve overall technique. Notable: Born in Liberia but left that war-ravaged country as child. Bottom line: Has tremendous upside. All problems are rectifiable with hard work and experience. Coaches love his size and ability to move. Once polished, will be something special and could develop as a defensive leader. Definitely worth a third-round pick, and may be worth a second. Final grade: 5.3

Ligarius Jennings, Tennessee State 5-101/4 195 4.49 4th round

NFL comparison: Thomas Smith, Bears Strengths: Good size and speed. Fluid athlete. Displays good overall athletic ability. Has great coverage skills and should make easy transition to NFL. Good in man-to-man coverage; uses solid build to press receivers and take them out of routes. Turns and runs well and knows how to play ball. Has flair for game, and plays it with passion. Very aggressive. Weaknesses: Sometimes is too aggressive, and can get beat as result. Has questionable recovery speed. Doesn't like to tackle or support the run. Notable: Was an all-city baseball player in Birmingham, Ala. Bottom line: Needs to work on technique and learn when to and when not to gamble. Division I-AA player who proved in postseason that he has natural skills to play with the big-school players. Has chance to develop into good cover corner but needs to rectify some of his overaggressiveness. Final grade: 4.7

Dwight Smith, Akron 5-93/4 182 4.49 4th round

NFL comparison: Brian Kelly, Buccaneers Strengths: Great speed. Plays ball well and jams receivers well. Strength and ability to push around receivers are impressive. Aggressive, physical and shows the confidence a cornerback needs to have. Also shows some promise as return specialist. Weaknesses: Needs to work on technique. Doesn't have

best feel for game. Has questionable footwork, which often prohibits him from adjusting to ball. Will get turned around at times when ball is in air. If he doesn't get a great shove at line of scrimmage, he could be in trouble. Notable: Mid-American Conference defensive player of the year last season. Bottom line: Doesn't have ideal size but plays bigger. Loves to get in receivers' faces and works at taking them out of their routes from the snap of the ball. But he's not the most fluid athlete, and if he doesn't press the receiver, he can be turned around easier than you would like to see. Should be a good nickel corner but may never be a starter who can be left alone in coverage. Final grade: 4.6

Jimmy Williams, Vanderbilt 5-11 190 4.48 4th round

NFL comparison: Todd Lyght, Rams Strengths: A good, smart athlete. Also is threat as kick returner. Has first-rate speed, and turns hips smoothly to turn and run with receivers. Has size, quickness, speed and hips to play at high level in NFL. Weaknesses: Questionable work ethic. Needs to get it together off the field and start watching more film. Technique is unpolished. Must improve feel for game. Mental lapses are costing him in technique and overall success. Notable: Can speak both French and Japanese. Bottom line: Has first-round talent but will be mid-round pick because he never worked to refine skills. Coaches are wary because of his work ethic. It's not that he doesn't like playing the game, but that it has always come easy to him. Has never worked to get better-and now it will cost him. Final grade: 4.4

Jamie Henderson, Georgia 6-3 200 4.55 4th round

NFL comparison: Tebucky Jones, Patriots Strengths: Terrific size and impressive ball skills. Physical and looks the part. Made huge strides during senior season after sitting most of his college career behind Champ Bailey. Worth taking chance on, because he has a lot of physical skills. Weaknesses: Lacks experience. Speed makes him better suited to play safety. Footwork is marginal, and he still gets turned around too much. Closing speed is not great, which causes him to play with more of a cushion than a big, physical defensive back should. Notable: Captained state championship teams in track and field and basketball in high school. Bottom line: Intriguing from size and strength standpoint but could use more experience at college level. Does too many things wrong, from technical standpoint, and speed is barely acceptable. There's a chance he'll get moved to safety, but he'll get shot to improve as corner first. Final grade: 4.1

Leonard Myers, Miami (Fla.) 5-10 195 4.55 5th round

NFL comparison: Bryant Westbrook, Lions Strengths: Has decent size and is physical. Shows great intelligence and feel for game. Likes to hit; throws body around defending run. Well-rounded athlete who elevates play of teammates. Weaknesses: Gets turned around too much in coverage. Poor tackler. Lacks great speed and quickness. Doesn't have ability to make up for lost step. Notable: Knows sign language. Bottom line: Always rose to occasion at Miami. Not a guy who can start in NFL, especially in man-to-man coverage, but is good enough athlete to contribute in nickel and dime situations. Final grade: 3.8

Alex Ardley, Clemson 5-10 170 4.52 5th round

NFL comparison: Donnie Abraham, Buccaneers Strengths: Durable athlete who never missed a start at Clemson. Playmaker with top-of-theline ball skills. Makes a lot of flashy plays with great hands and excellent leaping ability. Quicker than he is fast. Shows smooth hips and good burst out of his pedal. Has great natural athleticism and is fierce competitor. Weaknesses: Dismissed from squad in January for breaking team rules. Needed another year of school to continue to mature-on and off field. Has trouble against bigger receivers. Lacks great speed and needs to add some bulk/strength to be able to compete at NFL level. Notable: Set a Clemson record for passes broken up by a freshman with 10 in 1998. Bottom line: Was great college player who was getting better before being dismissed from team. Decided to enter draft early rather than playing at the I-AA level for a year. Has potential. Impressive athletic ability. Technique needs work and needs to add more bulk to frame. Will need a year to finish growing physically and mentally.

Final grade: 3.5

Eric Kelly, Kentucky 5-11 199 4.39 5th round

NFL comparison: Artrell Hawkins, Bengals Strengths: Shows good athleticism and tremendous game speed. Opens hips to turn and run extremely well. Displays tremendous speed and quickness in breaking on ball. Has physical skills to be productive in NFL. Upside is limitless. Weaknesses: Needs better coaching on unpolished techniques. Tends to bite on fakes and double-moves. Doesn't show good stop-and-start ability. Isn't real physical and is not willing to take on run blockers. Must get tougher and improve approach to game. Notable: Cousin of Todd Bowles, NFL defensive back from 1986-93. Bottom line: Has good cover corner skills, including excellent closing speed, but needs to be more physical. With refined technique and field awareness, could be impact player. A solid, middle-round prospect who needs time to get a better understanding of game. Final grade: 3.0

Michael Stone, Memphis 5-11 188 4.46 6th round

NFL comparison: Dre' Bly, Rams

Strengths: Excellent physical specimen who runs like a track star and jumps through the roof. Playing skills have improved dramatically over past two seasons. He's now at point where he can compete with some of the

NFL's top receivers. Has explosive speed/quickness and the extra gear that is so critical in the open field. Weaknesses: As much as he's improved in coverage, still has long way to go. Rough around the edges. Has only decent footwork, and his techniques and backpedal need refining. A project. Notable: Walked on at Memphis in 1998 and played in nine games. Bottom line: His natural skills can't be taught and he's proved to be coachable. May take a year or two to develop but could emerge as the steal of this class if put in the right situation. Final grade: 2.7

Kenny Bryant, Jackson State 5-111/2 188 4.56 6th round

NFL comparison: Ken Irvin, Bills

Strengths: Shows adequate quickness and speed. Faster than 40-yard time indicates and rarely looks slow on field. A natural athlete with good hip movement, solid strength at point of attack and good overall ball skills. Willing against the run. Weaknesses: Doesn't do anything great. Not overly quick or fast. Doesn't play the run all that well; has tendency to avoid taking on blockers. Good but not great in coverage, and it doesn't look like he's going to get much better. Notable: Set an NCAA all-divisions record by blocking seven kicks last season. Bottom line: One of those players you classify as "just a guy." Has decent speed, quickness and playmaking ability. Can still improve some but will never be great. Just isn't fast enough or instinctive enough to be an NFL starter. However, he will compete right away and should push for roles in dime package and on special teams. Final grade: 2.5

Fred Booker, LSU 5-91/4 188 4.59 6th round

NFL comparison: Jerry Wilson, Dolphins Strengths: Physical corner willing to take on run blockers. Strong tackler. Shows great instincts and rarely is caught out of position. Plays with more quickness than pure speed. Excellent change-of-direction skills. Able to cover lot of ground in zone coverages because he knows his position well. Weaknesses: A bit undersized to match up against NFL receivers. Lack of great pure speed hurts in man coverage. Looks the part on tape, but his lack of height and speed can't be ignored. Notable: Ended college career with 28 consecutive starts. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with his instincts and intelligence. They also like his competitive spirit and toughness. A positive guy in the locker room. His quickness and awareness make up for lack of speed. Could develop into impact player in a nickel or dime package, where his measurables can be hidden. Could prove to be a late-round steal. Final grade: 2.4

Raymond Walls, Southern Mississippi 5-101/2 175 4.35 6th round

NFL comparison: Terry Fair, Lions

Strengths: Has outstanding pure speed and ability to recover from mistakes. Can cover a lot of ground in zones. Opens hips well to turn and run with receivers, and has great burst out of backpedal. Reads plays well and has good reaction time. Has ability to get through traffic and make plays. Weaknesses: Undersized. Struggles against the run. Not real physical and doesn't have toughness to fight off blockers. Relies on athletic ability too much. Doesn't have well-rounded grasp of position. Notable: Spearheaded Southern Miss' 21-0 win at Alabama last season with a 54-yard interception return for the game's first touchdown. Bottom line: Converted wide receiver who's still adjusting. Cover skills are raw, but potential is unlimited. Must improve toughness and willingness to take on run blockers. Has outstanding speed and could have an impact as a return specialist. Final grade: 2.1

Kenneth Grant, Kentucky 5-103/4 206 4.43 7th round

NFL comparison: Michael Booker, Titans Strengths: A physical player who is outstanding at jamming receivers. Plays faster than 40 time indicates. Solid in coverage because he opens hips well to turn and run with receivers. Excellent run stopper. Weaknesses: Doesn't have great instincts. Struggles to cover lot of ground in zone coverage. Must improve read-and-react time. Tends to get caught out of position and gives up too many big plays. Notable: Related to NBA players Horace and Harvey Grant. Bottom line: Has outstanding competitive spirit. Physical style and willingness to take on run blockers impresses scouts. Might be forced to move to free safety because of lack of pure speed. Final grade: 1.8

Rodney Crayton, Auburn 5-71/2 181 4.50 7th round

NFL comparison: Kevin Mathis, Saints Strengths: Has lot of natural skills in coverage, including good hips, great quickness and solid ball skills. Has great leaping ability and the burst to close on underneath routes. A sure tackler who will hit. Weaknesses: Measurables hurt him. Undersized and doesn't run that well. Is quicker more than fast, but his speed costs him in the deep third of field. Gets pushed around too much and doesn't hold up real well physically against bigger receivers. Notable: Won Alabama Class 3A 100-meter championship in junior year. Bottom line: A good athlete who can cover but doesn't have the numbers scouts are looking for. Will warrant some looks in the last couple of rounds. Final grade: 1.7

Others: James Whitley, Michigan, 5-11, 191, 4.55 (40 time); Renaldo Hill, Michigan State, 5-105/8, 175, 4.58; David Mitchell, Ohio State, 5-11, 190, 4.50; Sam Young, Illinois State, 5-93/4, 178, 4.49; Jonathan Ordway*, Boston College, 5-10, 175, 4.42; Harold Blackmon, Northwestern, 5-11 1/4, 210, 4.56; Jerametrius Butler*, Kansas State, 5-10, 180, 4.50; Carey Scott, Kentucky State, 5-11, 208, 4.39; Dyshon Carter, Kansas State, 5-10, 186, 4.57; Larry Casher, Auburn, 5-97/s, 167, 4.57; Patrick Dyson, Utah, 5-11 1/2, 188, 4.56.

SAFETIES

OVERRATED

Adam Archuleta, Arizona State

A playmaking linebacker in college, he has only average size for an NFL safety and his coverage skills need work

UNDERRATED

Tony Driver, Notre Dame

If he dedicates himself and is allowed to stay at safety and develop, he could be starting material.

SLEEPER

Corey Hall, Appalachian State

His size and speed can't be taught, but he'll need time to adjust after playing at the small-college level.

STOCK ON THE RISE

Idrees Bashir, Memphis

He's a classic center fielder playing free safety, and he has the size to make his presence felt.

STOCK ON THE DECLINE

Al Blades, Miami (Fla.)

A lack of discipline overshadows all of his size and natural talent.

JOB REQUIREMENTS OPTIMUM 6-2 215 4.50 MINIMUM 5-10 190 4.65

The safety position has changed a lot over the last several years as new schemes and trends have evolved in the NFL. In the past, teams would draft big, physical guys who made their living intimidating receivers and being very physical in the running game. But many times they possessed only adequate man-to-man coverage skills, so it was almost like having two additional linebackers on the field. However, with the advent of the run-and-shoot offense and more multireceiver sets, this type of safety became a liability in passing situations. As a result, teams now look for safeties with more range, cover skills and athleticism. They still must be able to hit and come up against the run, and open-field tackling is a critical skill that can't be compromised. Today's safeties must be able to at least match up against the slot receiver if the nickel package isn't on the field. It's also a bonus if they have the ability to cover a back or tight end out of the backfield. That's a huge challenge, of course, when the back is someone like Marshall Faulk. In today's game, many teams don't distinguish between their free safeties and strong safeties. But those that do probably want a player who is a little more physical and solid in run support at strong safety. Those teams also would want a strong safety who is capable of covering tight ends. The free safety is more of a center fielder with range and instincts who also can make all of the secondary calls and get everybody in proper position.

e rate Derrick Gibson higher than most "experts." That's because we feel he is one of the great, untapped talents in this year's draft. Then you have Adam Archuleta and Marlon McCree, hardhitting types who will make the transition from linebacker to strong safety.

This year's class also has its share of "center fielder" types, such as Hakim Akbar and Idrees Bashir. The one player we cannot



seem to put a finger on is Gary Baxter. He's a top prospect at both cornerback and

safety-he played both in college. But after watching him extensively on video, we decided he would be better off at free safety.

Tony Driver is our "class pet." He made the transition from running back to safety at Notre Dame, where he showed flashes of brilliance but never had time to fully develop. If he is coached properly and given a year to learn, Driver could emerge as a Pro Bowl player.

*Denotes underclassman.

Derrick Gibson, Florida State 6-11/8 211 4.43 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Victor Green, Jets

Coverage skills: Has the tools to cover just about anyone. Has tremendous quickness, speed and reflexes. Doesn't produce consistently; attention to detail isn't always there. Has trouble backtracking on balls thrown downfield. Shows improved technique. Has tremendous upside. Grade: 7.2

Run/pass recognition: Still raw in this area. Takes too many false steps but has speed and change-of-direction skills to recover. Tends to overpursue and get out of position.

Grade: 6.6 Closing speed: Has explosive quickness and outstanding straight-line speed. Shows exceptional burst when chasing the ball. Grade: 7.6 Ball skills: Doesn't always make the big

play when in position. Will make the great play one time and not the next. Grade: 6.8

Run support: Strong, powerful and explosive. Plays well close to the line and shows great burst as a tackler. Knows how to wrap up and when to lower shoulder. Holds his ground at point of attack. Grade: 7.4

Notable: Majored in criminology at Florida State.

Bottom line: Has rare tools for a safety. Had some off-field troubles before his senior year but wasn't suspended. If coaches can get Gibson to play hard and smart on every down, he'll be a Pro Bowl player for many years. Final grade: 7.3

Adam Archuleta, Arizona State 5-11% 206 4.55 2nd round

NFL comparison: John Lynch,

Coverage skills: This is the biggest area of concern. Is making transition from college linebacker to NFL safety and is bound to have some coverage problems. Showed promise at Senior Bowl, but is not ready to cover a wideout one-on-one yet. Grade: 5.7

Run/pass recognition: Might struggle with reading his keys from safety position, but it's not like he hasn't read keys before. Keys are different and the responsibilities are greater, but he is experienced at the basic task.

Grade: 6.5

Closing speed: For a strong safety, has good speed and even better instincts. Breaks well on ball and shows burst in and out of cuts. Covers more ground than his 40 time would indicate. Grade: 6.9

Ball skills: Has surprisingly good hands and looks adept at going up for ball. Is a natural playmaker who knows how to use his strength to create separation. But he would rather go for the hit than play the ball.



MAKING THE MOVE: Archuleta's move to safety won't be painless, but don't bet against him.

Grade: 6.5

Run support: Will excel in this area. Monster against the run when playing middle linebacker in college and should be even better at safety. Great range and uses his hands to shed blockers. Remarkable strength and power as tackler. Grade: 7.8

Notable: Pac-10 Defensive Player of the Year last season.

Bottom line: Workout warrior with outstanding strength, speed, agility and explosion. Transition from outside linebacker to strong safety might take him a year or more, but it will be worth the wait. Final grade: 6.7

Gary Baxter, Baylor 6-11/8 198 4.53 2nd round

NFL comparison: Rod Woodson, Ravens

Gary Baxter



Baylor coach Kevin Steele speaks highly of Gary Baxter. He likes his work ethic. He admires his talent. He's impressed by the way Baxter has planned out his future.

All of that said, Steele did have a minor run-in with Baxter last fall. Over clothes.

It seems the Baylor players are expected to dress in a like manner when they travel to away games. On one short trip, the players decided to go informal and wear jogging suits. That didn't fit Baxter's sartori-

"Gary wanted to wear a suit," Steele says, laughing, "I said, 'No Gary, we're going to dress alike.' He wanted to wear a three-piece suit with all the accessories. He wasn't into the jogging suit."

Such is life for the dapper Baxter, who takes his appearance seriously. A fashion design major, Baxter plans to have a career in that field, hopefully with his own line of clothing, after his playing days are over.

Baxter says having a good NFL career—he even talks about being a Hall of Fame player—can only help with his post-playing career.

"I figure if I have a good career in football, then a lot of people will recognize my name," he says. While it's still to be determined what position Baxter will play in the NFL (safety or cornerback), and whether he'll stand out, you can bet he'll always stand out in appearance. "I just like to look nice and neat," he says. "If you dress well, you feel well and you look good."

And you also take a little good-natured ribbing from teammates when you plan on making a career in fashion design.

"He'll take some razzing for that," says Steele. "They're always asking him if he's planning on opening up a boutique with women's lingerie."

But when Baxter is on the field, there's nothing soft about his game. "When I go on the football field, I don't care how I look," he says. "I'll get down and dirty. You're going to know by the end of the game that I came to play. When I get on the field, (it's all about) making plays. And when I get off the field, it goes back (to looking good)."

And you can be sure Baxter will look good on draft day, when he is expected to be a late first-round or second-round pick.

"I plan on being (at the draft in New York), and you better believe I'm going to have a bad suit on," Baxter says. "... You're going to know my taste and my style is very high."

While wearing stylish suits off the field and talking about the Hall of Fame before he has played a down in the NFL might sound cocky, Steele prefers to look at Baxter as being confident-on and off the field.

"He's not an obnoxious, overbearing, look-at-me guy," Steele says. "He just has a lot of confidence in his ability to get the job done." -Alan Gerdes

Coverage skills: Aggressive, cocky player who liked to play bump-and-run as a college corner. If he moves to safety, he will have excellent coverage skills. Will be type of safety who can play man up on the line or back off and play the deep third. Will need some work on technique in zone. Grade: 7.0 Run/pass recognition: Time at free safety in college improved play-reading skills. Type of player you want to create man-to-man matchups for, especially against backs and tight ends. Will have trouble recognizing pass versus run at first. Grade: 5.6

Closing speed: Doesn't have great straightline speed but has exceptional quickness and closing speed. Nimble for a tall player. Speed for safety is excellent. Grade: 7.1

Ball skills: Natural playmaker. Always is around the ball and makes plays. Shows outstanding hands and leaping ability. Has learned to catch the ball at its highest point and will make plays in traffic. Grade: 7.0 Run support: Biggest weakness. Has nose for the ball and is big and physical enough to make a difference against the run. But to succeed in the NFL, he will have to improve his footwork and technique. Grade: 5.5

Notable: Had a career-high 16 tackles against then-No. 1 Nebraska last season. Bottom line: Comes from program that didn't

have much talent, so opponents avoided him. Moved to safety as senior during some games just to get more involved, and it looks like the best fit for him. His coverage skills go from average as corner to great as safety, and he has size to improve in run support. Final grade: 6.4

Hakim Akbar, Washington* 6-0 195 4.49 2nd round

NFL comparison: Henry Jones, Bills Coverage skills: Big, physical guy who can run and cover. Likes to be aggressive in coverage, sometimes too aggressive, but does nice job of making his presence known. Makes mistakes in coverage and footwork needs work, but is a raw talent with lots of room to improve. Grade: 6.1

Run/pass recognition: Will get overzealous and caught out of position. Aggressive nature has led to some big plays for offenses, but it's also why he is such a playmaker. In time, he will learn when to take risks and when to back off. Grade: 4.9

Closing speed: Rare speed for player his size. Recovers beautifully and shows a second gear in open field. Grade: 7.0

Ball skills: Ballhawk with great hands and leaping ability. Plays ball well in air and knows how to use size to get positioning. Grade: 6.6

Run support: Likes to mix it up and has size to become force against run. Always scrapping and around the ball. Covers a lot of ground but sometimes takes poor angles and gets out of position, which leads to missed tackles. Grade: 5.7

Notable: Had team-high nine tackles in Washington's Rose Bowl win over Purdue. Bottom line: All of his problems stem from limited experience and a need for more coaching. He's raw but also very talented. His ball skills are the main attraction. He always seems to be in right place at right time. Final grade: 6.0

Idrees Bashir, Memphis* 6-3 210 4.55 3rd round

NFL comparison: Lee Flowers, Steelers Strengths: Tremendous size/speed combination. Can run, cover and is true ballhawk. Fluid athlete with great hip movement that allows him to turn and run with receivers. Outstanding range. Weaknesses: Has size but is not yet a force against run. Not a sure tackler; sometimes takes poor angles to ball and comes up short. Footwork and speed are average. Notable: Had a school-record 100-yard interception return against Army last season. Bottom line: Emerged from nowhere to become one of top safety prospects. Will get many looks in first couple of rounds but could slide to top of the third. Final grade: 5.9

Jarrod Cooper, Kansas State 6-01/2 215 4.55 3rd round

NFL comparison: Kwamie Lassiter, Cardinals Strengths: Natural athlete with track background. Good speed and great intensity. Loves to charge the line and make the big hit. Aggressive, especially against the run. Will make a lot of plays in run support even when lining up 10-12 yards off the ball. Has speed and quickness to cover. Weaknesses: Sustained hip injury in a July 2000 car accident. Does not turn and run with receivers as well as scouts would like. Shows average coverage skills, and lacks discipline in coverage. Will take a lot of false steps because of poor run/pass recognition skills. Notable: Four-year track letterman in high school

who triple-jumped more than 47 feet and long-jumped over 23 feet. Bottom line: Will have to improve his coverage skills and, most important, run/pass recognition to excel in NFL. Final grade: 5.6

Marion McCree, Kentucky 5-10% 195 4.57 3rd round

NFL comparison: Brian Dawkins, Eagles Strengths: Had great speed and quickness for college linebacker, so transition to safety should be smooth. Extremely quick in and out of cuts and solid in man-to-man and zone coverage. Covers a lot of ground and packs a punch for a small guy. Weaknesses: Undersized. Needs to adjust to covering faster receivers. Needs to improve tackling. Notable: Began college career at safety before becoming three-year starter at linebacker. Bottom line: Exciting player with a lot of potential. Might take a year to develop at safety but should contribute right away on special teams. Final grade: 5.3

James Boyd, Penn State 5-11½ 204 4.50 4th round

NFL comparison: Robert Griffith, Vikings Strengths: Very aggressive and physical. Packs a punch for someone his size and is a sure tackler. Shows good awareness and run/pass diagnosis skills. Shows good technique and always seems to be in right position. Weaknesses: Not as big or as strong as some safeties. Lacks experience. Plays run extremely well but might be a bit undersized to play close to the line. Notable: Led Big Ten with 84 solo tackles last season. Bottom line: Will be better pro player than college player. Physical tools are hard to overlook. Aggressive, smart player who always gets in position and makes a lot of plays against the run. Scouts love this guy. Final grade: 4.9

Cory Bird, Virginia Tech 5-93/4 218 4.41 4th round

NFL comparison: Tony Parrish, Bears Strengths: Very productive and active. Has great speed and quickness, and covers a lot of ground. Willing hitter against run. Has good field presence and great instincts. Weaknesses: Willingness to stop the run can get him in trouble. Tends to be overzealous and needs to eliminate false steps. Also has trouble in man-to-man coverage. Notable: Majored in interior design. Bottom line: If coached to channel his energy, he could be a big-time playmaker in NFL. Solidly built and can run with just about anyone. Final grade: 4.7

Leo Barnes, Southern Mississippi 6-01/8 200 4.66 4th round

NFL comparison: Chad Cota, Colts Strengths: Has good size and does well in matching up against bigger, stronger receivers in underneath coverage. Has good instincts and makes smart decisions. Has knack for making big plays, especially against run. Weaknesses: Tends to get

exposed in man coverage. Doesn't open up hips well to turn and run. Also lacks closing speed to recover if he gets beat. Notable: Defensive MVP of the East-West Shrine Game. Bottom line: Could be liability because speed and agility are not up to par. Struggles in covering speed receivers in the deep third, which is why he might have to be protected in NFL. Could be moved to strong safety if tackling improves. Final grade: 4.3

Tony Driver, Notre Dame 6-1% 210 4.48 4th round

NFL comparison: Darren Sharper, Packers Strengths: Outstanding athlete. Durable and can play many positions. Always seems to be around ball. Has excellent feel for game. Breaks well on ball and makes plays in coverage. Weaknesses: Didn't reach potential at Notre Dame, mostly because of changing back and forth from running back to safety. Might be huge underachiever. Scouts question off-field dedication. Notable: Returned two fumbles for touchdowns in one quarter against Navy last season. Bottom line: Has unlimited potential, but his attitude is a big concern. But overall skills are worthy of fourth-round selection. Final grade: 4.0

Robert Carswell, Clemson 5-11% 219 4.55 5th round

NFL comparison: Lawyer Milloy, Patriots Strengths: Impressive combination of size and speed. Shows good range and is very active. Smart player with good field awareness. Breaks on ball well. Physical player who likes to punish receivers. More than willing to fill gaps against the run. As fouryear starter, he has a ton of experience. Weaknesses: Might be a little too heavy; has trouble covering faster players and must be matched up mostly against tight ends. Plays the run too much like a linebacker and forgets about his responsibilities as safety. Notable: Nearly wound up at Notre Dame. Lived just a few miles from Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Ind., before moving with family to Georgia at age 9. Bottom line: Would have been a perfect fit back in the days of David Fulcher. Not the cover safety teams need. Still could help a team on special teams. Final grade: 3.8

Tony Dixon, Alabama 6-01/8 203 4.63 5th round

NFL comparison: Pat Tillman, Cardinals Strengths: Outstanding size. Very smart player with impressive instincts. Always appears to be in correct position. Is a force against run; more than willing to fill gaps. Weaknesses: Doesn't turn and run well with receivers. Marginal speed; is exposed at times in coverage. Notable: First athlete from his Alabama high school to earn a Division I scholarship. Bottom line: Defends run much better than pass. Coverage skills need to improve or opponents will work him over all day. Final grade: 3.7

Adrian Wilson, NC State* 6-21/2 212 4.50 5th round

NFL comparison: Marguis Smith, Browns Strengths: Big-time hitter with great natural tools. Has size, speed and power to make a huge impact in NFL. Plays like a linebacker. Loves to play close to line. Is a force against the run and has speed to develop for coverage. Weaknesses: Has trouble in man-to-man matchups and gets lost in zone coverage. Notable: Attended same high school as former North Carolina State and Vikings running back Ted Brown. Bottom line: Has huge upside but will need time to develop. Plays big against the run. Just needs coaching and experience in coverage. Final grade: 3.4

Nijrell Eason, Arizona State 6-0½ 204 4.59 5th round

NFL comparison: Darryl Williams, Bengals Strengths: Impressive combination of size and speed. Has solid coverage skills and great body control. Plays with toughness and loves to hit. Uses hands well and has remarkable ball skills. Weaknesses: Might not have the quickness most coaches demand at corner, which is why he's better off at safety. Movement isn't smoothest. Has a lot of trouble defending double-moves in man coverage. Notable: Consensus first-team junior college All-American in 1998. Bottom line: All signs point to Eason playing safety in NFL. Will need time to make the transition, but it seems natural. Final grade: 3.1

J.T. Thatcher, Oklahoma 5-11 220 4.55 6th round

NFL comparison: Jerome Woods, Chiefs Strengths: Was huge contributor on Oklahoma's national championship defense. Big-play artist with great size. Also big hitter who covers a lot of ground. Shows good ball skills. More of a strong safety but can be capable in coverage with limited responsibility. Weaknesses: A bit raw. Has some skills but they need refining. Tends to take poor angles to the ball and isn't always in position. Notable: Averaged 24 yards on kickoff returns and 14.7 yards on punt returns last season. Bottom line: Made huge strides as senior. Has great build and good speed. Tremendous asset because of ability to return kicks. Final grade: 2.8

Michael Jameson, Texas A&M 5-111/4 187 4.42 6th round

NFL comparison: Cory Hall, Bengals Strengths: Shows great footwork; quick in and out of cuts. Rangy guy who gets to ball in air. Good athlete, and doesn't hesitate to come up in run support. Has great feel for zone coverage and elevates the play of teammates. Weaknesses: Needs to improve manto-man coverage skills. Not a sure tackler. Notable: Returned three interceptions for touchdowns in 1999. Bottom line: Ballhawk who makes plays, especially when he's allowed to roam. NFL coaches can teach him most of the things he lacks, and they

love the fact he is a team leader. Final grade: 2.6

Terrence Carroll, Oregon State 5-113/4 215 4.55 6th round

NFL comparison: Damien Robinson, **Buccaneers**

Strengths: Has good combination of size and speed. Has a lot of upside. Has good range and makes big plays. Quick in and out of cuts. Very aggressive against pass and run. Will sell out in run support and is a big hitter. Weaknesses: Has missed a lot of game time because of injuries. Needs to improve technique. Tends to take false steps in coverage. Notable: Oregon State's team captain for two years. Bottom line: College free safety who will move to strong safety in NFL. Scouts love his natural ability, but he needs to pass his physical and run a better 40 time to be drafted in the first five rounds. Final grade: 2.5

Al Blades, Miami (Fla.) 6-01/2 200 4.60 6th round

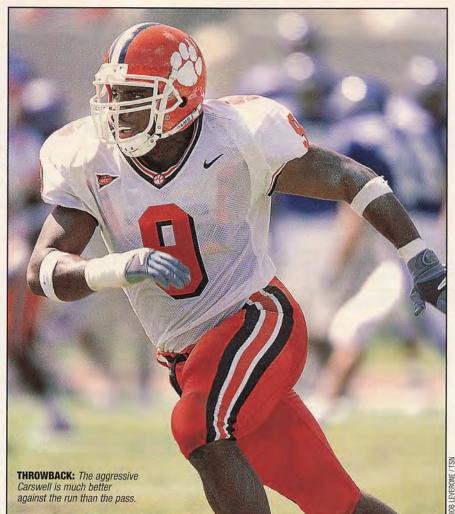
NFL comparison: Marquez Pope, Raiders Strengths: Instinctive and knows the position well. Great awareness in the deep third and breaks fluidly on ball. Quick in and out of cuts; shows no wasted motions. Also has good size and speed to match aggressive style. Weaknesses: Overly aggressive at times and tends to get caught out of position. Just average in man coverage and tends to get exposed by speed receivers. Notable: Brother of former NFL players Bennie and Brian Blades. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with his athletic ability and understanding of position, as well as his family tree. Could be a liability against the pass but is worth having around as a run stopper. Final grade: 2.1

Ifeanyi Ohalete, Southern California 6-13/4 218 4.60 6th round

NFL comparison: Jason Belser, Colts Strengths: Physical presence against run and pass. Plays with great toughness and rarely misses a tackle. Shows impressive intelligence and understanding of everyone's role in secondary. Weaknesses: Lacks good speed and quickness, and doesn't show a lot of range in the deep third. Tends to get exposed in man coverage. Isn't efficient at run/pass diagnosis. Gives up too many plays in passing game. Notable: Is half Nigerian and spent time with his father's tribe, Ebo, in two trips to Nigeria. Bottom line: Better suited to play closer to the line, instead of strictly sitting in coverage. Has all the intangibles to be an impact player at free safety. Final grade: 2.0

Corey Hall, Appalachian State 6-3% 205 4.50 7th round

NFL comparison: Rodney Harrison, Chargers Strengths: Has all the intangibles. Long arms, a rangy build, great leaping ability and a nose for ball. Gets in on a lot of tack-



les and always seems to be in the mix. Weaknesses: Not real physical. A bit unpolished and can get lost in coverage. Tends to get turned around and will lose receiver on occasion. Can become overconfident and gets himself out of position. Notable: Won a Georgia state championship in the triple jump and finished second in the long jump in high school. Bottom line: The fact Hall hails from a Division I-AA school could hurt his stock. He also is very raw. But he's an impressive physical specimen. Final grade: 1.8

Julian Jones, Missouri 5-11% 189 4.63 ■ 7th round

NFL comparison: Kurt Schulz, Lions

Strengths: Impressive overall athletic ability. Plays faster than 40 time. Shows good quickness in and out of cuts. Heavy hitter at point of attack. On paper, looks like he can't cut it, but give him a chance on field. Weaknesses: A bit undersized to play safety

in NFL. Doesn't have very good instincts defending pass and tends to get out of position. Has limited range. Notable: Once highjumped 6 feet, 10 inches by diving head-first over the bar. Bottom line: Doesn't fit mold of a starting NFL defensive back. Too small to play safety and lacks speed to play corner.

Will have to earn merit on special teams. Final grade: 1.7

Carl Nesmith, Kansas 6-11/2 211 4.93 7th round

NFL comparison: Mark Carrier, Redskins

Strengths: Versatile player with outstanding athletic ability. Big, physical guy; shows great power at point of attack. Never stops hustling. Loves to hit. Will give his all on special teams as a gunner. Weaknesses: Lacks pure speed to cover a lot of ground. Needs more coaching because his skills are raw. Gets caught out of position at times because instincts are still developing. Notable: Led Kansas with 103 tackles last season. Bottom line: Scouts are impressed with size and athletic ability, but he must become more of a student of the game. Switched to defense late in his college career. Final grade: 1.5

Others: Shawn Forte, Maryland, 6-1, 201, 4.54 (40 time); John Howell, Colorado State, 5-11, 187, 4.60; Emile White, Houston, 6-01/2, 220, 4.55; John Norman, Texas Tech, 6-01/2, 219, 4.60; Jason Doering, Wisconsin, 5-11 1/8, 200, 4.73; Lynn Scott, Northwestern (Okla.), 6-01/4, 200, 4.59; Curtis Fuller, Texas Christian, 5-93/4, 187, 4.54; Anthony Henry, South Florida, 6-05/8, 202, 4.78.

PLAYER BATINGS

HICHERS/PUNTERS

KICKERS

Vitaly Pisetsky, Wisconsin 5-9 225 5.00 (40 time) 4th round

Strengths: Strong enough to convert regularly from 50 yards.
Most kickoffs land near goal line.
Considered extremely accurate.
Can kick in bad weather.

Weaknesses: Not a huge leg. Will have to improve quickness in approach. Bottom line: Solid, allaround kicker. Not easily rattled. May be worth fourth-round pick. Final grade: 4.3

2 Bill Gramatica, South Florida 5-91/4 188 5.22 5th round

Strengths: Huge leg, especially on kickoffs. Can kick under pressure. Accuracy is decent, getting better.

Weaknesses: Better kickoff specialist than field-goal kicker. Needs to improve accuracy. Bottom line: Brother of Tampa Bay's Martin Gramatica. Has a lot of desirable skills. Final grade: 3.5

Jamie Rheem, Kansas State 6-11/4 192 5.27 5th round

Strengths: Long leg with above-average accuracy. Experienced. Can handle pressure. Weaknesses: Accuracy on kicks beyond 40 yards is biggest problem. Doesn't do great job kicking off. Bottom line: Exciting prospect who might need time to work out kinks. Has huge leg but needs to improve overall accuracy. Worth taking a look at in fifth or sixth round. Final grade: 3.0

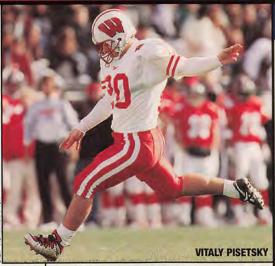
Nick Gatto, Arkansas State 5-111/4 188 4.45 6th round

Strengths: Accuracy is good. Has exceptional speed for kicker. Weaknesses: Doesn't have great leg strength. Bottom line: Was born with only one full arm. Accuracy is excellent but might never improve leg strength. That's why he's no better than a sixth-round prospect. Final grade: 2.4

5 Mike Clark, Houston 6-11/8 194 4.98 7th round

Strengths: Really improved as senior. Strong leg. Weaknesses: Needs to work on accuracy and quickness of approach to ball. Mechanics could use fine-tuning. Bottom line: Brother of 49ers tight end Greg Clark. Is 25 (took time off for religious mission). Has average skills as punter, kicker and kickoff specialist, but not great in any one role. Worth taking a look at in final two rounds. Final grade: 1.9

Others: Scott Westerfield, Mississippi State, 6-1, 192, 5.09 (40 time); Brian Kopka, Maryland, 5-7, 166, 5.00.



PUNTERS

David Leaverton, Tennessee 6-3 210 5.10 5th round

Strengths: Excellent size and a strong, solid leg. Absolutely crushes ball at times. Gets excellent distance and accuracy is good. Weaknesses: Not consistently great but improved tremendously from junior to senior season. Bottom line: Worth looking at in fifth round. Final grade: 3.9

Nick Harris, California 6-1¾ 217 4.90 5th round

Strengths: Great size and huge leg. Might have best natural leg strength in class.

Weaknesses: Hang time is above average, but consistency still is a problem. Looks great on one punt, average on next. Bottom line: Will need some work on punting within his coverage and directional punting. Worth a fifth-round pick. Final grade: 3.2

3 Dan Hadenfeldt, Nebraska 5-10½ 191 4.74 6th round

Strengths: Strong leg with quick release. Gets good hang time and distance. Also can kick field goals but is a better punter and kickoff specialist. Weaknesses: Needs work on directional punting skills. Bottom line: Can be great if he improves mechanics. Raw leg strength gives him shot to be a sixthround pick. Final grade: 2.9

Jason Baker, lowa 6-05% 198 4.60 7th round

Strengths: Good overall athlete, with great speed and good leg strength. Weaknesses: Adequate hang time, but consistency still not there yet. Needs to speed up release. Bottom line: Versatile and has real upside. Will get consideration in last couple of rounds. Final grade: 1.9

Others: Kevin Stemke, Wisconsin, $6 \cdot 2^{1/4}$. 187, $4 \cdot 90$ (40 time); Matt Allen, Troy State, $6 \cdot 4^{7/8}$, 246, $5 \cdot 13$; Kent McCullough, Miami (Ohio), $5 \cdot 11^{3/8}$, 209, $4 \cdot 94$.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

KICKERS

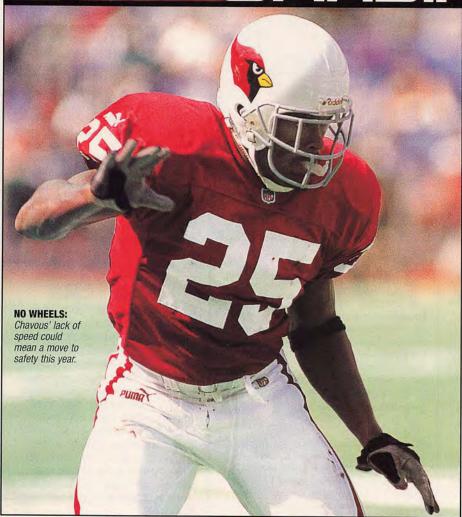
The best quality a kicker can have is consistency. A kicker must be mentally tough and resilient, knowing that the outcome of a game might be riding on his leg. He also must be able to adjust to all kinds of weather conditions. A strong leg is preferred because of long-range field goal and kickoff responsibilities. But as many kickers play into their late 30s, their distance might decline and teams need to find other guys to kick off. Most coaches would prefer an experienced kicker with lesser skills over a young guy who has a stronger leg but is less experienced in pressure situations. There have been a lot of strong-legged kickers who never made it in the NFL because they could not handle the mental pressure of the job.

PUNTERS

NFL teams look for punters who not only have strong legs but also have good hang time and direction. The ability to put the ball where you want can sometimes compensate for lack of distance. Athleticism also is an asset for a punter. He must be able to handle bad snaps, and the ability to run or pass out of punt formation is a bonus. Most teams demand a two-step punter with a quick release. If you are a three-step guy, you probably will get some punts blocked and get a ticket out of the NFL. On many teams, the punter also holds on field-goal and extrapoint attempts-a real bonus because he spends the majority of his practice time with the kicker.

KICKOFF and PUNT RETURNERS

Rarely will you find a return specialist who does nothing else. Most also are positional players who are at least backups. A kickoff returner usually is bigger and more physical than a punt returner because the kick-return guy is basically a north-south runner. He must have excellent speed and a willingness to attack the hole on his returns. He will have a lot of physical confrontations, so he must be fearless. A punt returner relies more on quickness than all-out speed. Obviously, he must have great hands and the ability to focus on the ball in traffic. His success depends on his ability to avoid tackles while weaving his way through traffic. Instincts, quickness and the ability to make darting moves are skills required to be a good punt returner. If he has great speed, it makes him even more special.



DDOIECTED DEDTU CUADT

1	PKWEGIED I	JEPII	n Chaki
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Jake Plummer	LE	Andre Wadsworth
1	Dave Brown		■ Brad Ottis
FB	Joel Makovicka	LT	Mao Tosi
	Dennis McKinley		Tony McCoy
RB	■ Michael Pittman	RT	Russell Davis
	Thomas Jones		Mark Smith*
WR	David Boston	RE	■ Simeon Rice*
200	MarTay Jenkins		■ Thomas Burke
WR	Rob Moore	LLB	Zack Walz
	Frank Sanders	-	Raynoch Thompson
TE	Terry Hardy	MLB I	Ronald McKinnon
	Chris Gedney*	Devis !	Johnny Rutledge
LT	L.J. Shelton	RLB I	Rob Fredrickson
WOED IN	N. Davidds-Garrido	-	Sekou Sanyika
LG	Matt Joyce	LC I	Aeneas Williams
	Yusef Scott		David Barrett
C	■ Mike Gruttadauria	SS	Pat Tillman*
	Chris Dishman*	last I	Tommy Bennett*
RG	Lester Holmes	FS I	Kwamie Lassiter
DT	N. Davidds-Garrido	100	Justin Lucas
RT	Anthony Clement	RC	Tom Knight
1/	N. Davidds-Garrido	HO	Corey Chavous
K	Cary Blanchard	P	Scott Player
	Can play for any t		Solid player

TEAM NEEDS

G: Lester Holmes and Chris Dishman played poorly far too frequently for the team to stand pat this offseason. Dishman moved to center in the absence of Mike Gruttadauria (neck injury) last season and could be called on again this season if the injury forces Gruttadauria to retire, although medically he has been cleared. But Dishman is an unrestricted free agent, so his return isn't definite. Matt Joyce, who started 13 games, may return, but his marginal quickness doesn't warrant a starting job.

DT: The Cardinals have some promising youth in Mao Tosi, Russell Davis and Jabari Issa. Still, the team couldn't stop the run last year. Tony McCoy, 31, will return from a season-ending knee injury, but the situation at the position is too far gone for him to make much of a difference. Veteran Mark Smith was a major disappointment last season and is an unrestricted free agent. There were times last season when Arizona was unable to dress more than five linemen because of injuries and ineffectiveness. That can't happen this year if the defense is to improve.

Mario Fatafehi of Kansas State could fill a serious void.

DE: Considering Andre Wadsworth's chronic knee trouble, you can bet the team will look to improve on the edge. Even if Simeon Rice returns, his play has been uninspiring, and the team is worried about his future contribution. In the past, the Cardinals were so strong at tackle that an edge rusher suited the defense well. However, with all the problems the Cardinals are having on the inside, they might look for a powerful end who can play the run effectively. Alabama's Kenny Smith could work out here.

TE: Starter Terry Hardy was again inconsistent last season. He has the skills to be great, but he can't seem to put them all together. After Hardy, there are a ton of question marks. Chris Gednev's return from kidney trouble was encouraging, but he didn't appear to have any real impact on the offense. Rookie Jay Tant finished the year on the injured-reserve list after spending most of it on the bench. The lack of production from this position really hurt the offense and quarterback Jake Plummer. The unit needs a sure-handed, heady tight end. Todd Heap from Arizona State deserves a look.

CB: Aeneas Williams, who has been designated the team's franchise player, isn't getting any younger-or quicker for that matter. On the right side, Tom Knight and Corey Chavous are sporadic in coverage. The opposition successfully targeted Chavous' suspect speed last

season, and, as a result, he might move to safety. David Barrett can be counted on to contribute in the nickel and dime packages, but he doesn't appear ready to take on a starting role. Fellow reserve Coby Rhinehart missed the season with a torn ACL and is a long shot to return to the team ready to start. Acquiring a cornerback might appear premature when you take Williams' skills into consideration and last year's fourthround selection of Barrett. However, Williams' departure remained a possibility. So a developmental-type player such as Tennessee State's Ligarius Jennings could fit nicely.

FB: The team might be in the market for a more versatile weapon here. The new offense will be of the smash-mouth nature, and the revamped attack will lean heavily on the fullback. Departed offensive coordinator Marc Trestman ran the West Coast offense, which didn't ask much of starter Ioel Makovicka. However, the new scheme will use the fullback as a blocker, runner and receiver. Depth at this position is a concern and should be addressed. Makovicka is a hard-nosed blocker, but he isn't very danger-

ous with the football. Texas A&M's Ja'Mar Toombs would bring the team strong running and blocking skills.

THE OUTLOOK

The Cardinals enter the draft with the No. 2 overall selection, but the need for help in several different areas could lead to a trade.

Arizona must improve at guard and across the defensive line. The team can improve those areas in the middle or late rounds.

The Cardinals are set at wide receiver for now, but they'll probably look for an upgrade at tight end. Plummer has been without a steady receiver at the position since he joined the team. Adding a threat in the middle of the field would make things much easier on him. New offensive coordinator Rich Olson favors a conservative passing game, so it's likely the team will look for help at tight end on draft day.

The upgrade on the interior of the offensive line may come in an unconventional fashion. Don't be surprised if the Cardinals snatch up a talented offensive tackle in the draft and move mammoth left tackle L.J. Shelton to guard. The team also might draft the best talent available-regardless of position-with a few picks and move some veterans around to put the best group possible on the field. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Thomas Jones, RB Major disappointment. Should be high-priced backup again.

2. Raynoch Thompson, LB Showed he can contribute, but needs to add some bulk.

3. Darwin Walker, DT Cut by Cardinals and picked up

by Eagles. Played in one game.

4. David Barrett, DB

Contributed in nickel, but might not be ready to start.

5a. Mao Tosi, DT

Did nice job filling in for starter Tony McCoy. Solid prospect.



5b. Jay Tant, TE Had little impact as rookie. Was placed on IR late in season.

6. Jabari Issa, DT

Was pleasant surprise as a backup. Team likes his future. 7. Sekou Sanyika, LB

Saw time as reserve OLB. Should return to same role.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Cards did a terrific job building their defense with late-round picks.

offensive line didn't help.

Arizona's efforts in recent years have concentrated on improving a withered offense. Last year's firstround pick, RB Thomas Jones, was a huge disappointment. That there were weak youngsters on the

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	9	8	10	11	8
Starters	1	3	5	2	1
Backups	0	2	2	7	6
Other team	2	0	1	1	1
Out of NFL	6	3	2	1	0

CARDINALS WAR ROOM

With Dave McGinnis as coach, there will definitely be a shift in who has influence in the selections. Although general manager Bob Ferguson is still in charge and has an excellent working relationship with McGinnis and the coaching staff, this draft is likely to belong to McGinnis. He will evaluate film of players on both sides of the ball, he will work out most of the players the team has targeted, and he will sit in on all the draft meetings. In recent memory, the club has not had a head coach this involved in making draft-day decisions. McGinnis has a lot of new assistant coaches on the staff who will have moderate input. However, look for McGinnis to work closely with Ferguson, executive Rod Graves and the scouts to not only fill some big holes in this team, but also add athleticism and depth. This talent-deprived team probably will entertain serious offers for its first-round (second overall) pick. With a team that needs quantity as well as quality, McGinnis easily could trade down in the first round to accumulate extra picks in the second and third rounds. Then it would be up to McGinnis and his staff to use them wisely.



TEAM NEEDS

G: Anthony Redmon's athletic ability is far better than his feel for the game. A freeagent pickup before last season, Redmon had a terrible first year at right guard. He was the starter for the first four games but was bumped off the active roster for each of the final 12 games. On the left side, 1998 second-round selection Bob Hallen began the year as a starter but was so bad he finished the season as an emergency reserve. The Falcons have a quick-hitting passing attack and an interior running game, and those depend on solid guard play. It's no wonder the offense struggled last season. This position must improve for Atlanta to become a winner again. Travis Claridge was the most pleasant surprise last year, when he finished his rookie season as a starter on the right side. A USC product, he should be a starter for seasons to come. Calvin Collins showed adaptability by finishing the season on the left side-and playing well-after starting the first eight games at center. Chad

Ward of the University of Washington probably could step right in and contribute here.

WR: The passing game hasn't been the same since the team decided not to re-sign Tony Martin after the 1998 season. Shawn Jefferson was signed as a free agent before last season and brought some speed, but it wasn't enough to keep a defense honest. Terance Mathis is a solid possession guy, but he will be 34 in June. Tim Dwight's duties on special teams limit his role in the offense to that of a No. 3 receiver. Reserves Eugene Baker, Brian Finneran and Jammi German are able backups but don't require special attention. The Falcons need a game breaker such as Clemson's Rod Gardner, who could help alleviate some of the pressure on running back Jamal Anderson.

DE: The loss of Chuck Smith and Lester Archambeau as free agents before last season force-fed Patrick Kerney a starting job and prompted the signing of Brady Smith. Each gave a great effort, but neither was very dependable. Smith and Kerney are young and play with great intensity, but they

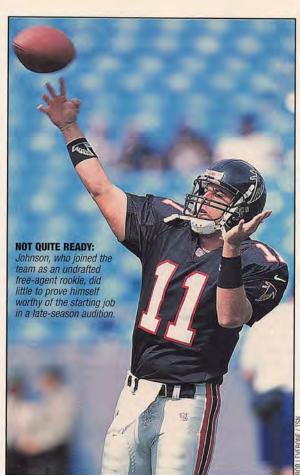
OFFENSE DEFENSE Chris Chandler LE Patrick Kerney Chuck Wiley Doug Johnson Travis Hall Bob Christian Shawn Swayda Kevin McLeod Jamal Anderson RT Shane Dronett Maurice Smith Ed Jasper M Shawn Jefferson **Brady Smith** Chuck Wiley Tim Dwight WLB Keith Brooking Terance Mathis Brian Finneran Chris Draft MLB Jessie Tuggle Reggie Kelly ■ Brian Kozlowski* Jeff Kelly Bob Whitfield SLB Henri Crockett* Mark Simoneau Bob Hallen LG Calvin Collins Ray Buchanan Eli Williams Wes Shivers ■ Todd McClure Marty Carter Evan Pilgrim* Johndale Carty Ronnie Bradford RG Travis Claridge Anthony Redmon Gerald McBurrows' Ashley Ambrose RT Ephraim Salaam Terry Cousin* Michael Thompson Dan Stryzinski*

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

Morten Andersen*

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART



are undersized against the run and slow off the edge rushing the passer. Atlanta needs to acquire a passrushing end and a run stuffer. Finding one player who can fill both roles well would be a bonus. Cedric Scott, an underachiever from Southern Mississippi, might be a worthwhile middle-round pick.

QB: Chris Chandler is under contract through the 2003 season, but there was some doubt during the season about his future in Atlanta. Chandler was briefly demoted to No. 3 on the depth chart last season. but he redeemed himself in the final game. Despite the earlier demotion, coach Dan Reeves wants Chandler to return. If Chandler does, it must be noted that he will turn 36 during the season. Backup Danny Kanell bombed in a late-year audition. Undrafted freeagent rookie Doug Johnson also saw time late in the season, and he was decent. However, he didn't show the overall ability it takes to be a starting NFL quarterback. If the Falcons don't make a move for Virginia Tech's Michael Vick or address this position early in the draft, then Mike McMahon of Rutgers might make sense in the later rounds.

ILB: Jessie Tuggle's 2000 season ended prematurely with a knee injury. This year, Tuggle will be 36. Considering that he was already a step slow going into last year, Atlanta may want a linebacker who can pick up the pace in the middle. This is why the Falcons need to consider using a middleround pick on Oklahoma's Torrance Marshall. There is some talent behind Tuggle in Mark Simoneau, a third-round pick last year out of Kansas State. But Simoneau has had a problem tempering his intensity, which has limited his ability to play smart.

OT: Right tackle Ephraim Salaam appears to have emerged as the team's second-best offensive lineman, behind left tackle Bob Whitfield. But Salaam still is inconsistent. Whitfield, who will turn 30 in October, isn't getting any younger and will be playing in his 10th season. Michael Thompson should get plenty of snaps as a reserve after rarely playing as a rookie in 2000. Penn State's Kareem McKenzie could help the depth on the outside.

RB: Jamal Anderson returned in 2000 after missing a year because of reconstructive knee surgery, and he didn't appear tentative. But he failed to equal the level of production that enabled his team to reach the Super Bowl after the 1998 season. The elusive running of free-agent rookie Maurice Smith during the preseason convinced the Falcons to release veterans Byron Hanspard and Ken Oxendine. In the regular season, Smith wasn't as productive. The Falcons need to recognize that Anderson's knee might be fragile and that Smith might not be a long-term answer. Massachusetts' Marcel Shipp, a little-known player with nice instincts and toughness, could provide instant depth.

Reeves had an offseason meeting with Chandler that went well, and it appears Chandler will be the starting quarterback this year. So the Falcons probably won't select Drew Brees of Purdue with the fifth pick. Instead, look for Atlanta to upgrade at receiver with a genuine big-play guy. Last year, Atlanta was expected to choose a wideout in the early rounds, but the team opted for help on defense.

The Falcons also will work to improve up front, on both sides of the ball. Last season, poor play and a lack of depth on the offensive line knocked Chandler out of several games. Meanwhile, the defensive line allowed opposing running attacks to flourish. Reeves has not experienced much success with the draft since arriving in Atlanta, so the pressure will be on for him to find some talent this year. Nevertheless, Reeves is expected to take a job in the Falcons' front office after the season, so don't count on a win-now approach to the draft. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

2. Travis Claridge, G-OT Started at both guard and tackle. Could start at tackle in '01. 3. Mark Simoneau, LB Early-season injury limited role. Expected to help as a reserve. 4. Michael Thompson, OT Played little as rookie. His future could be bleak.

5. Anthony Midget, CB Cut by Falcons. Picked up by Bucs but never got into a game.

6. Mareno Philyaw, WR Cut by Falcons. Spent season on Saints' practice squad



Team's best pick in this draft. Returned three kickoffs for TDs.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Falcons have had plenty of chances to select impact players with high draft picks in recent years. But they haven't delivered. Most of the team's early choices under coach Dan Reeves are with another team or out of football. However, some solid starters have come from middle-round picks.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	6	9	9	9	6
Starters	0	2	2	4	1
Backups	0	0	4	2	5
Other team	3	3	0	2	0
Out of NFL	3	4	3	1	0

FALCONS WAR ROOM

After two disastrous seasons, coach Dan Reeves desperately needs a solid draft to fill the many holes on this aging team. The front-office staff is loyal to Reeves. Its members have been together a long time and are on the same page in terms of personnel philosophy. Although he will consider input from his coaching staff, and from general manager Harold Richardson and vice president of football operations Ron Hill, Reeves will have the final decision on draft day. However, the Falcons have seen more turnover on their coaching staff this offseason than in recent memory, which may change Reeves' focus during this period. With all the new assistants involved and with Reeves apparently near the end of his career, there is some uncertainty about the direction this team is headed. This is an organization that hasn't taken a lot of chances in the past. The Falcons seem to put the emphasis on character and toughness as much as athletic ability. They have struggled in recent drafts, and although it would be beneficial this year to be aggressive and maneuver to obtain extra picks, that is not their style. As usual, expect the Falcons to be relatively quiet on draft day, allowing the draft to come to them.

BALTMORE RAVENS

TEAM NEEDS

RT: Harry Swayne doesn't have much left in his tank, and no one else on the roster is qualified to take over, so look for this position to be a target in the first round. By the time the Ravens pick (the last selection in the first round), players such as Illinois' Marques Sullivan and Georgia Tech's Chris Brown still should be available.

RB: The scouting staff did an excellent job last year, hitting the jackpot with rookie back Jamal Lewis. That was the good news. The bad news is Priest Holmes and fullbacks Chuck Evans and Sam Gash all are unrestricted free agents. The Ravens need Evans or Gash to return to back up Obafemi Ayanbadejo. Holmes has been a tremendously positive influence on Lewis, but it would be naive to think he would stick around as a backup when he could get more

money and a better role elsewhere. It's likely the team will use a middle-round pick to replace Holmes with a player such as Ohio State's Derek Combs, who could spell Lewis on third-down plays.

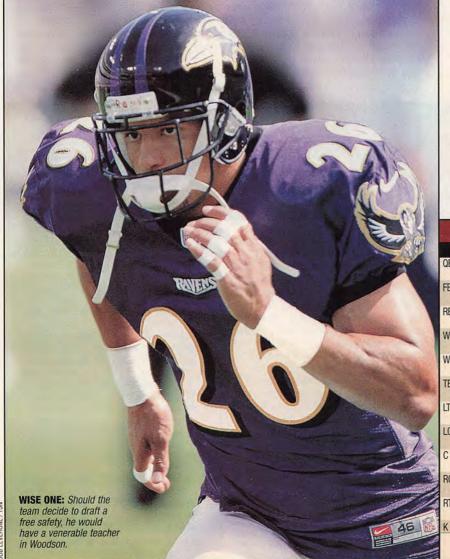
G: The organization had a big decision to make regarding Mike Flynn's future. Flynn, an unrestricted free agent, isn't a spectacular player, but he performed well enough last season for the team to be able to establish a solid running game. His ability to play guard and center makes him even more valuable. Backup Orlando Bobo also is a free agent, so the team is aware it needs to address depth at the position. But even if Flynn and Bobo return, it would be wise to draft a guard—such as Wisconsin's Bill Ferrario—to push the two veterans.

OLB: Starter Jamie Sharper and backups O.J. Brigance, Cornell Brown and Anthony Davis all were unrestricted free agents. Sharper did not suffer a letdown after a breakthrough 1999 season, which is why there is a chance he will return. In any case, look for the Ravens to use one of their middle-round picks to draft a player such as Washington's Jeremiah Pharms, who has great athleticism, can back up spots on the outside and can contribute right away on special teams.

C: Jeff Mitchell and backup John Hudson, who primarily is a long snapper, both were unrestricted free agents. Mitchell gave every indication that he would like to return, and the coaching staff appeared to want him back, so it was likely the two parties would come to an agreement. However, Mitchell has a history of injuries, and Hudson is not likely to return, so it would be wise for the team to draft a center in the late rounds—a player such as Robert Garza out of Division II Texas A&M-Kingsville—to add depth.

FS: This would be a good time to draft an eventual replacement for 14-year veteran Rod Woodson. He still is playing at a high level, but his legs are bound to give this season or next. With so few glaring needs, the Ravens could afford to use a second- or third-round pick to draft a player with a lot of upside but who still needs time to develop, such as Washington State's Lamont Thompson. Woodson is a great student of the game and would be able to nurture the player for the starting role before retiring.

WR: Brandon Stokley emerged in the Super Bowl as a playmaker, which gives this unit more depth in its three- and four-receiver sets. But Patrick Johnson is not likely to return, and Travis Taylor missed most of his



ı		PROJECTED	DEPTH	1 CHART
		OFFENSE		DEFENSE
ļ	QB	Trent Dilfer* Tony Banks	LE .	Rob Burnett Keith Washington
7		O. Ayanbadejo Chuck Evans*	LT	Tony Siragusa Larry Webster
	RB I	Jamal Lewis Priest Holmes*	RT .	Sam Adams Lional Dalton
200	A STATE OF THE PARTY OF	Qadry Ismail	RE .	Michael McCrary
No.	WR	Billy Davis Brandon Stokley	SLB	Adalius Thomas Peter Boulware
	TE I	Patrick Johnson Shannon Sharpe	MLB	Cornell Brown* Ray Lewis
	1000	Ben Coates* Jonathan Ogden	WLB	Brad Jackson Jamie Sharper* Anthony Davis*
	LG	Spencer Folau Edwin Mulitalo Kipp Vickers	LC .	Duane Starks James Trapp
1	С	Jeff Mitchell* John Hudson*	SS ■	Kim Herring*
	RG	Mike Flynn* Kipp Vickers	FS .	Rod Woodson Corey Harris
100	RT I	Harry Swayne Spencer Folau	RC .	Chris McAlister Robert Bailey
	K	Matt Stover	P .	Kyle Richardson
A		Can play for any t		Solid player I free agent.

rookie season with a shoulder injury. With coach Brian Billick likely to pursue a quarterback in free agency capable of playing in a more wide-open offensive attack, do not be surprised if the Ravens use a third- or fourth-round pick on a big receiver such as Tennessee's David Martin (6-3, 215) to add size in the red zone.

The downside to winning a Super Bowl is the process of deciding which players are expendable for the following season. And with 14 unrestricted free agents, turnover was inevitable. But making those decisions was the challenge for the Ravens' personnel department.

Now, the first order of draft business will be to improve and add depth to the offensive line, especially at right tackle. The team might look in free agency for a veteran to replace Swayne, last year's starter who is likely to become a cap casualty. But do not be surprised if it uses its first pick on the top tackle available.

The team also will look to find at least one quality guard to add depth behind Flynn and Edwin Mulitalo. In addition, the team would like to fortify a number of positions: linebacker, offensive line, running back and receiver. But for the most part, the Ravens can afford to take the best available athlete throughout the draft. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1a. Jamal Lewis, RB Emerged as one of the top run-

ning backs in the league. 1b. Travis Taylor, WR

Missed half of 2000 with injuries. Should regain starting role.

3. Chris Redman, QB

A long-term project, but team is excited about his future.

5. Richard Mercier, G

Cut by Ravens and wound up with Packers but never played.

6a. Adalius Thomas, DE

Should contribute more as a third-down pass rusher in '01.



6b. Cedric Woodard, DT Cut by Ravens and signed by Seahawks. Inactive all season.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Super Bowl-winning personnel is partly due to success in the draft and partly due to success in free agency. Ray Lewis, Duane Starks and Jonathan Ogden have been among the draft gems. But the Ravens' mid- to late-round picks have vielded little talent in recent years.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	7	12	7	4	6
Starters	2	4	2	2	1
Backups	1	1	1	2	3
Other team	1	0	1	0	2
Out of NFL	3	7	3	0	0

RAVENS WAR ROOM

The Ravens' front office, led by vice president Ozzie Newsome, has developed into one of the best in the NFL. The team has overcome severe salary-cap problems in recent years, and it has a great blend of youth and veteran leadership to build around. Newsome has an outstanding scouting staff, led by Phil Savage, who concentrates on the draft, and James Harris, who focuses on pro personnel. Newsome welcomes input from all of his scouts and coaches, which has led to good morale in the front office, and he has an uncanny feel for which players would best fit the Ravens' needs. He and coach Brian Billick have a good working relationship—Billick provides strong input on what he wants and needs to improve his football team, and Newsome does a great job of addressing those areas. Final personnel decisions usually are made by a committee of Newsome, Billick, Savage, Harris and owner Art Modell, Baltimore has done a great job of acquiring players who have toughness and instincts without sacrificing athleticism and speed. There is no better organization in the NFL right now at finding players to fill specific roles. If you are looking for a model NFL front office, Baltimore might be the place to start.

TEAM NEEDS

S: Unlike most teams, Buffalo's top need isn't a glaring one. When the team lost free safety Keion Carpenter (ankle injury) in the final weeks of the season, the Bills realized how thin they are in the secondary. They drafted Travares Tillman last year in the second round, but he has taken awhile to develop, and some feel he might be a better fit at strong safety. The team wasn't completely happy with Carpenter, either, which is why Buffalo could look to upgrade through free agency or the draft. It's rare for any NFL team to take a safety in the first round. If the Bills were to take the risk, they might consider Florida State's Derrick Gibson, one of the top athletes in the entire draft, who would make an instant impact.

WR: The Bills desperately need to add depth to this unit. They drafted Avion Black and Drew Haddad last year, but neither player panned out. Black, a fourth-round pick, was active for only three games and finished the season at the bottom of the depth chart. Haddad, a seventh-round pick, was cut once

in the preseason, then spent time on the Bills' practice squad and now is with the Colts. Jeremy McDaniel is currently the team's No. 3 receiver, with Black and undrafted free agent Kwame Cavil at the fourth and fifth spots. McDaniel has shown some big-play flair, but he's not consistent. Peerless Price was supposed to replace Andre Reed, but the secondyear receiver disappointed the Bills. Price and McDaniel likely will retain the second and third receiving spots, lining up behind Pro Bowl receiver Eric Moulds. The Bills could improve by adding a bigger receiver such as Eastern Kentucky's Alex Bannister in the middle rounds of the draft. At 6-5, Bannister would provide a nice target in the team's three- and four-receiver sets.

CB: The team drafted Antoine Winfield two years ago when it already had two solid cornerbacks in Ken Irvin and Thomas Smith (now with the Bears). The Bills might be thinking that way again and looking to add depth at cornerback. Chris Watson played relatively well when Winfield was out, but he is not a long-term answer, and Donovan Greer could leave as a free agent. By using a sec-

DECLECTED DEPTH CHAPT

	PKUJELIED I	UEPIT	I CHAKI
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Rob Johnson	LE I	Phil Hansen
	Alex Van Pelt		Shawn Price*
FB/HB	Sammy Morris	NT I	Pat Williams
	Sheldon Jackson		None
RB	Shawn Bryson	RE I	Marcellus Wiley*
	Antowain Smith		Erik Flowers
WR	Eric Moulds	ROLB	Keith Newman
	Jeremy McDaniel		Fred Jones
WR	Peerless Price	RILB I	
1000	Avion Black		Kenyatta Wright
TE	Jay Riemersma	LILB I	Sam Cowart
	■ Bobby Collins		Jay Foreman
LT	John Fina	LOLB	
	Jon Carman	-	Corey Moore
LG	Ruben Brown	LC I	Antoine Winfield
	Victor Allotey		Chris Watson
C	Jerry Ostroski	SS I	Henry Jones
	Bill Conaty		Raion Hill
RG	Jamie Nails*	FS I	Keion Carpenter
	None		Travares Tillman
RT	■ Marcus Spriggs*	RC I	Ken Irvin
	■ Robert Hicks		Donovan Greer*
K	Steve Christie*	PN	lone

ond-round pick on a cornerback, the Bills could get one of a few unpolished but potentially gifted corners, such as Mississippi's Ken Lucas or Minnesota's Willie Middlebrooks. DT: New coach Gregg Williams has stated that he wants to be versatile on defense. That means he wants to be able to play a 3-4 scheme, which already was in place, as well as a 4-3, which he used as the defensive coordinator of the Titans. The Bills have a quality defensive tackle in Pat Williams, but if the unit is to make greater use of four-man fronts, it will need more, especially after releasing Ted Washington in a salary-cap move. Because there is good depth at defensive tackle in the draft, Buffalo probably could wait until the third round and still get a player such as Stanford's Willie Howard or Ohio State's Ryan Pickett.

OT: This is another spot where Buffalo wants to add depth through the draft. John Fina is entrenched at left tackle, and Marcus Spriggs played surprisingly well at right tackle. However, Spriggs could be lost in free agency. Originally, the Bills thought Robert Hicks would be the starter on the right side for years to come, which is why Jerry Ostroski was moved to center. But Hicks didn't hold up in pass protection. With that in mind, a solid veteran swing tackle would be a wise addition through free agency. Otherwise, the Bills should use a fifth- or sixth-round pick to grab a prospect such as South Florida's Kenyatta Jones, who could develop behind a veteran

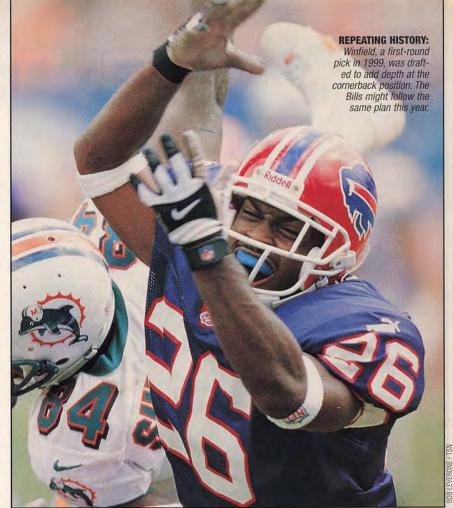
QB: Having Doug Flutie and Rob Johnson on the same roster was bad for chemistry. One thing was certain: somebody had to go. So the Bills released Flutie and named Johnson their starting quarterback for the 2001 season. Alex Van Pelt is next on the depth chart, but he is an unrestricted free agent and doesn't fit as a top backup. The Bills could get Western Carolina's David Rivers in the middle rounds and start developing him for the future.

K: After 11 seasons, including the last nine with the Bills, Steve Christie no longer has the leg strength the Bills need in their kicker. He gave Buffalo his best years as a pro, but the Bills need a young leg. They could use a seventh-round pick on Kansas State's Jamie Rheem or wait and hope to grab him as an undrafted free agent.

THE OUTLOOK

The Bills will use this draft to continue their trend of getting younger and faster on both sides of the ball. They should be in good shape to draft a solid player to fit in a particular position. There is plenty of depth but not much star-quality talent at the top of the board, so the Bills' first-round pick (14th overall) isn't bad.

New G.M. Tom Donahoe recognizes the need for a starting free safety plus depth at cornerback and offensive tackle. Donahoe also will need to use at least one of the Bills' top picks on a defensive tackle. Donahoe's style is to go for quantity late in the draft. Because the team does not have a fourth-round pick, look for it to make a move to acquire more picks in the late rounds. -The War Room



2000 DRAFT

1. Erik Flowers, DE Didn't produce as much as expected, but hopes remain high.

2. Travares Tillman, S

Finished the season as the team's starting free safety.

3. Corey Moore, LB

Received valuable playing time as a reserve. A specialty type.

4. Avion Black, WR

Failed as a return man but still could help on special teams.

5. Sammy Morris, RB

A big surprise. Will split carries with Shawn Bryson in 2001.



6. Leif Larson, DT Will battle for a backup job at defensive end next season.

7a. Drew Haddad, WR

Cut by Bills before season. Colts signed him to practice squad. 7b. DaShon Polk, LB

Reserve LB and special teamer. The coaches like his future.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

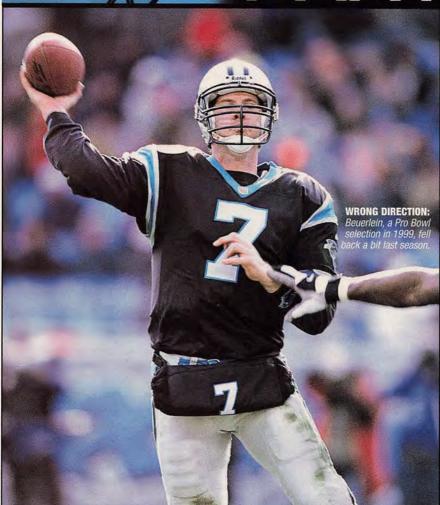
Thanks to talented players drafted in the late rounds, including LB John Holecek (fifth round) and TE Jay Riemersma (seventh), the Bills were playoff contenders throughout the '90s. But many decision makers in those drafts are gone, so a decent draft history isn't very relevant to the future of this team.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	10	6	6	9	8
Starters	2	3	1	5	1
Backups	0	1	3	2	6
Other team	5	0	1	1	1
Out of NFL	3	2	1	1	0

BILLS WAR ROOM

This is a time of change in Buffalo, which is unusual for one of the league's more stable franchises. Gone are general manager John Butler and director of pro personnel A.J. Smith. Tom Donahoe has arrived as the Bills' new general manager, bringing to Buffalo a résumé lined with success as a personnel guy with the Steelers. Donahoe hired coach Gregg Williams, who may have more input into both personnel decisions and the draft than people think. The new G.M. and the new coach appear to have mildly different backgrounds regarding the draft. Donahoe has a reputation as an astute evaluator of talent but is fairly conservative and not one to take a lot of chances. Williams, on the other hand, came from a Tennessee organization that put a premium on speed and athleticism and didn't hesitate to take a chance on some players. It will be interesting to see how well they mesh on draft day because the Bills need these two men on the same page. The Bills traditionally have a solid scouting department that works very well as a group, and Donahoe is an ego-less man who will let everyone do his job, which makes for a very stable front office. Look for the Bills simply to fill their needs without a lot of big moves on draft day.

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-	I HOSEOIED E		I CIMILI
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	■ Steve Beuerlein	LE I	Reggie White
	Jeff Lewis		Jay Williams
FB	Chris Hetherington	LT I	■ Tim Morabito
1	Brad Hoover	1	■ Eric Swann*
RB	■ Tim Biakabutuka	RT I	Sean Gilbert
	Brad Hoover		Al Lucas
WR	Patrick Jeffers	RE I	Jay Williams
	■ Donald Hayes		Mike Rucker
WR	Muhsin Muhammad	SLB	Dean Wells
	Karl Hankton		Hannibal Navies
TE	Wesley Walls	MLB I	Lester Towns
	Kris Mangum		Dean Wells
LT	Clarence Jones*	WLB I	Lee Woodall
	Jeno James		O.J. Childress
LG	James Dexter	LC I	Jimmy Hitchcock
	Matt Campbell*		Deveron Harper
C	Frank Garcia*	SS I	■ Mike Minter*
	Jamar Nesbit		Damien Richardson
RG	Jamar Nesbit	FS I	■ Eugene Robinson*
Live-	James Dexter	4	Rashard Anderson
RT	■ Chris Terry	RC I	Doug Evans
	Melvin Tuten*		Reggie Howard
K	John Kasay	PI	Ken Walter
	Can play for any t	eam I	Solid player
1	Fringe player *Ur		

TEAM NEEDS OT: Clarence Jones, an unrestricted free

agent, began the 2000 season as the starter at left tackle. It wasn't too long before he was getting attacked and, eventually, exposed with frequency. Jones was replaced at midseason by rookie Jeno James, a sixthround pick out of Auburn. James was impressive at times but wasn't ready to assume such a crucial role so early in his career. It's amazing that quarterback Steve Beuerlein avoided a major injury last season. The Panthers will be pushing their luck in this regard if they don't try to improve themselves at this position. Florida tackle Kenyatta Walker is a possible candidate the team could land with the 11th overall pick. CB: Eric Davis was released in a salary-cap move. Holdovers Doug Evans and Jimmy Hitchcock are heady corners with a knack for making plays, but both will be 30 or older next season. It's only a matter of time before the Panthers' defense starts to suffer as a result of the age at this position. With that as the case, an upgrade at cornerback through the draft is a necessity. The Panthers

will have a chance to acquire some talent in the middle rounds, partly because the emergence of small-school talent has improved the overall depth at corner. A nice fit here would be Western Illinois product William Peterson.

G: Last season, James Dexter just couldn't play the smart football the NFL requires, and he sat for most of the season because of it. Dexter's sizable contract and ineffectiveness could make him a salary-cap casualty. Jamar Nesbit was impressive on the right side, but he isn't good enough to make up for the overall lack of talent at the position. Also, reserve Bryan Stoltenberg could get cut before the start of training camp. The Panthers will probably look toward a guy such as Bernard Robertson of Tulane to improve this situation.

LB: Hannibal Navies has shown some real promise on the outside as a reserve and should assume a starting role before too long. Starters Lee Woodall and Dean Wells offer experience on the perimeter, but their skills are fading fast. The Panthers need some more speed and strength at the position. A guy such as Florida State's Brian Allen might possess the eye-opening combination that the team is looking for here.

DT: George Seifert is certainly a good coach, but even he will tell you the situation involving 2000 free agent Eric Swann went awry. Swann's knee trouble didn't permit him much playing time, and his company inside was just average. Jason Peter's neck injury is apparently career threatening, and Sean Gilbert is erratic and old. Tim Morabito continues to overachieve in the trenches. Improvement at tackle is imperative if the Panthers are to get better at stopping the run (they ranked 26th in the NFL last season). Southern California's Ennis Davis could provide some help. Davis is a bit inconsistent, but he has got the talent and ability to contribute immediately.

C: Frank Garcia is a free agent, and his status is uncertain. Aside from Garcia, the Panthers don't have a natural center on their roster. So, spending a draft pick on a center wouldn't be a reach. A guy the team might take a chance on late is Jeff McCurley of

QB: Beuerlein was unable to duplicate his fine 1999 performance last season. Now 36, he will work toward rediscovering his past success. No. 2 quarterback Jeff Lewis has yet to live up to his hype or high-priced contract, but his lack of production can be partially attributed to Beuerlein's durability. Nevertheless, Lewis is missing the overall instincts it takes to be a starter in the NFL. and with Beuerlein's time running out, help is needed. Dameyune Craig is the team's No. 3 quarterback, but he didn't pass much in 2000, although he did get some playing

time at running back. A possibility here could be Sage Rosenfels of Iowa State. If the Panthers can get Rosenfels in the fifth or sixth round, they'll probably consider him a

THE OUTLOOK

The Panthers always have been opposed to using their early picks on offensive linemen. However, the glaring need for a left tackle has to be addressed. The thinking is that acquiring a starter at tackle through free agency will be too expensive, so spending an early draft pick on an impact player at the position makes sense.

Carolina will likely spend more than just one pick on offensive-line help. Expect Seifert to make a move to obtain a player such as Tulane's Robertson to help at guard. Robertson is in the mold the Panthers are looking for; it appears that he can contribute immediately.

The team also needs to add youth to its aging secondary. Expect the Panthers to spend a pick on a cornerback they can develop. The lack of depth at linebacker will also be dealt with, and the help should come on the outside.

Lewis' lack of development and Beuerlein's age will probably lead to a quarterback selection. And the potential defection of Garcia through free agency could prompt the selection of a center. -The War Room

2000 DRAFT

1. Rashard Anderson, DB Spent early season converting to FS. Helped some in nickel.

2. Deon Grant, S

Fractured hip in training camp but has made a rapid recovery.

3. Leander Jordan, G

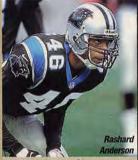
Last season was "redshirt year" for small-college product.

4. Alvin McKinley, DT

Showed little production, but he's too talented to give up on.

5. Gillis Wilson, DE

Added some depth to the defensive line.



6. Jeno James, OL Was starting left tackle by end of season. Has bright future.

7. Lester Towns, LB

Team's best draft pick. Became a staple in middle of defense.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The nearly constant front-office shuffling that the team has endured has led to inconsistent drafting trends in the past five years. It has been hit-or-miss for the Panthers with picks such as WR Muhsin Muhammad ('96 second round) and QB Kerry Collins ('95 first round), who is now with the Giants.

tes.					
Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	10	6	8	5	7
Starters	2	2	1	1	2
Backups	0	0	3	4	5
Other team	3	1	1	0	0
Out of NFL	5	3	3	0	0

PANTHERS WAR ROOM

Members of the Panthers' front office continue to work well together, mostly because of coach George Seifert, who has given the front office and coaching staff one philosophy. Although owner Jerry Richardson and his son, Mark, are actively involved in day-to-day operations, Seifert does a great job of managing this organization in a non-egotistical way that doesn't offend anybody. Personnel director Jack Bushofsky is a solid talent evaluator who organizes the draft well and is very thorough; the Panthers are not an organization that takes a lot of chances or makes a lot of moves. Seifert moderately involves his coaches in personnel decisions, taking opinions from everybody. That improves the morale of the staff, but the final decision is his. Carolina continues to be a team that likely will draft by need, rather than follow the best-athlete-available theory. The Panthers have several holes to fill in their roster and, as a result, their picks will tend to be conservative. Don't expect to see a lot of activity on draft day. Instead, look for this team to take the players off the board the way it has them graded, which is an indication of a very organized, if not flashy, front office.



ning back, was picked on by opponents all sea-

Francisco. He probably still is having night-

nothing more than a nickel player. R.W.

mares of Terrell Owens, who caught a league-

record 20 passes against him. He clearly fits as

McQuarters came through with a huge perfor-

mance in the season finale against Detroit and

son, especially late in the year at San

TEAM NEEDS

DE: For whatever reason, the Bears didn't use Van Tuinei and Troy Wilson, players we felt could help, in situational rush roles. Regardless, the team has bigger problems. Chicago spent top dollar to land Phillip Daniels, and he was admittedly not the same player he was in Seattle. Daniels wasn't as explosive off the edge and must rededicate himself to the weight room this offseason. Clyde Simmons has had an excellent career, but it's time for him to hang 'em up. Bryan Robinson, who was named the team's transition player, is an excellent first- and seconddown run stuffer. The team must find a speed rusher to platoon with Robinson opposite Daniels. If the Bears decide to go this route in the first round, which is strongly anticipated, two possibilities are Florida State's Jamal Reynolds and Missouri's Justin Smith. CB: It was unclear whether unrestricted free

agent Walt Harris was going to return. The

ful the Bears are willing to pay enough to

keep him. Jerry Azumah, the converted run-

team would like to re-sign him, but it's doubt-

is likely to get a longer look as a starter in camp. There aren't many sure-fire cover men in this year's draft, but the Bears could look to fill this void in the second round, where they could land Baylor's Gary Baxter (though some teams believe he is better suited for safety) or Mississippi's Ken Lucas. TE: The degree of need at this spot will be determined by the philosophy of new coordinator John Shoop, but the Bears clearly lack an every-down, line-of-scrimmage tight end. The team traded Alonzo Mayes to Miami, and John Allred, who missed most of the season

with a knee injury, is a free agent. The Bears signed former Jet Fred Baxter in February, but he's no more than a solid backup. Even if Allred returns, this isn't a team strength. The talent at the postseason all-star games was

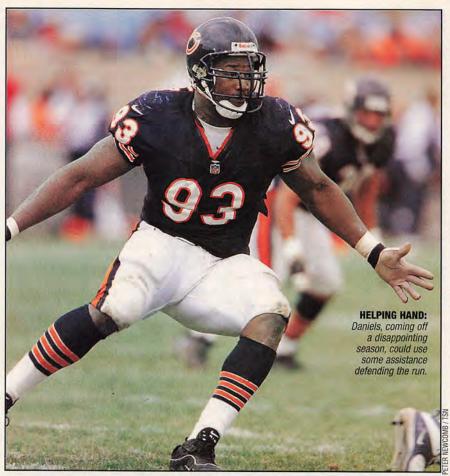
OFFENSE DEFENSE Cade McNown Bryan Robinson* QB Jim Miller Van Tuinei* FB Scott Dragos Jim Flanigan John Allred* Brad Culpepper James Allen Mike Wells Marlon Barnes ■ Bryan Robinson* Marcus Robinson Phillip Daniels Eddie Kennison* Van Tuinei* OLB Sean Harris WR Bobby Engram Marty Booker Warrick Holdman TE Fred Baxter MLB Brian Urlacher Dustin Lyman Khari Samuel LT OLB Rosevelt Colvin B. Brockermeyer Sean Harris Jimmy Hemdon Thomas Smith LG ■ Todd Perry* LC Rex Tucker Jerry Azumah SS Olin Kreutz Tony Parrish Frankie Smith* Casey Wiegmann* Chris Villarrial Mike Brown Rex Tucker Shawn Wooden James Williams ■ Walt Harris* R.W. McQuarters Jerry Wisne

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

Paul Edinger

Louie Aguiar*



2000 DRAFT

1. Brian Urlacher, LB

NFL defensive rookie of year and future Pro Bowl mainstay. 2. Mike Brown, DB

Wrested starting FS job from vet Shawn Wooden in camp.

3a. Dez White, WR Rarely saw field as rookie, but

coordinator change could help. 3b. Dustin Lyman, LB

Athletic college LB made switch to TE. Helped on special teams. 4. Reggie Austin, CB

Third-string corner. Speed gives him chance to make impact.



6a. Frank Murphy, RB Bucs poached him off team's practice squad late in season.

6b. Paul Edinger, K

Won job in camp. Ended season by kicking a 54-yard field goal. 7a. James Cotton, DT

Cut before the season began. 7b. Mike Green, DB

Ended the season third on depth chart at SS.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY After a dismal run

under the direction of former coach Dave Wannstedt, the Bears have turned things around. Vice president of player personnel Mark Hatley has done a tremendous job upgrading the team's overall athleticism. But drafting QB Cade McNown could prove to be a huge blunder.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	7	10	8	13	9
Starters	3	2	2	1	2
Backups	0	1	1	9	5
Other team	2	1	5	3	1
Out of NFL	2	6	0	0	1

BEARS WAR ROOM

The Bears continue to rebuild a team that is behind the NFL curve in terms of talent. But they might be starting to catch up. Led by vice president of player personnel Mark Hatley and college scouting director Bill Rees, they have a solid front office that works very well together. Its members, who are not a real flashy or well-known group among the general public, are all on the same page. The Bears front office has taken a lot of heat for its No. 1 picks over the past couple of years, as players such as running back Curtis Enis, who was released by the team, and quarterback Cade McNown have struggled to become impact players. The first-round woes have set the Bears' master rebuilding plan back a step or two. It will be interesting to watch the effect of a shift in philosophy on offense for the Bears, with offensive coordinator Gary Crowton and his wide-open pass offense now gone. Coach Dick Jauron is likely to go to a more conventional offensive style, which may force the Bears to adjust the qualities that they are looking for in offensive skill players. The coaching staff has moderate input into personnel decisions, but this is really Hatley's show, and final decisions rest with him.

mostly works-in-progress. Expect vice president of player personnel Mark Hatley to wait until the fifth or sixth round to address this need. He could pick from include Georgia's Jevaris Johnson and Virginia's Billy Baber.

G: The team will have to think long and hard before parting ways with starter Todd Perry. The free agent played pretty well last year and will surely get some interest on the open market. Versatile backup Casey Wiegmann, a top reserve at guard and center, probably will leave in free agency in hopes of landing a starting job elsewhere. If he moves on, the Bears will be awfully thin in the interior. Historically, they haven't placed much value on this position in the draft, so don't expect them to go after the elite group. There is a decent number of tough guys, such as Mississippi State's Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack, to select in the middle rounds.

P: Early-season project Brent Bartholomew didn't pan out, so the Bears were forced to sign aging veteran Louis Aguiar. He ranked near the bottom of the league in most statistical categories and won't be brought back. Bartholomew was unimpressive during training camp last summer. A quality veteran free agent must be signed, and it wouldn't be a bad idea to spend a seventh-round pick on another young leg. Tabbing a guy like Iowa's Jason Baker would at least create a more competitive environment in camp.

QB: Some would argue, and they might be right, that this is a much more glaring need than the other positions mentioned. Cade McNown's season-long struggles served as a warning sign that he's not a lock for the future. McNown, the 12th overall pick in 1999, hasn't demonstrated the necessary work ethic, and his teammates haven't responded favorably to his me-first attitude. The Bears' scouting staff has its eye on a group of players projected to be picked in the middle rounds. Drafting a project-type athlete such as Arkansas State's Cleo Lemon would at least send McNown a message.

THE OUTLOOK

Despite what last season's record might indicate, this team is not that far away from contending in the NFC Central. The Bears' front office has done a tremendous job of upgrading the overall athletic ability of the roster the past

In this draft, the team would be wise to land a big-time pass-rush threat on the edge. We'll be shocked if the Bears don't hold on to the eighth overall pick and secure the rights to the top defensive end available. The team hit the jackpot last April when linebacker Brian Urlacher fell to them at the No. 9 spot. Another impact player would really bolster a potentially strong front seven. Hatley has done a nice job of massaging the draft and acquiring additional picks in recent years, so look for some wheeling and dealing on the second day.

Although there are needs at defensive end, tight end and guard, don't be surprised if the team takes a receiver in the middle rounds. Shoop, who takes over for departed Gary Crowton, won't use as many multiple-receiver sets, but the team can't enter next season with Marcus Robinson as the only healthy returning starter on the perimeter. -The War Room

BENGALS

TEAM NEEDS

DE: Jevon Langford has not been the productive player the Bengals hoped he would become, and Michael Bankston was to become an unrestricted free agent. Reinard Wilson, a converted linebacker who went through a horrible time adjusting to his new position last year, was the only other player to finish the year healthy, as Vaughn Booker ended the season on injured reserve. Even if Bankston re-signed and Booker returned healthy, the team still would be in desperate need of passrush help. The Bengals could draft Missouri's Justin Smith or Florida State's Jamal Reynolds with their firstround pick, No. 4 overall.

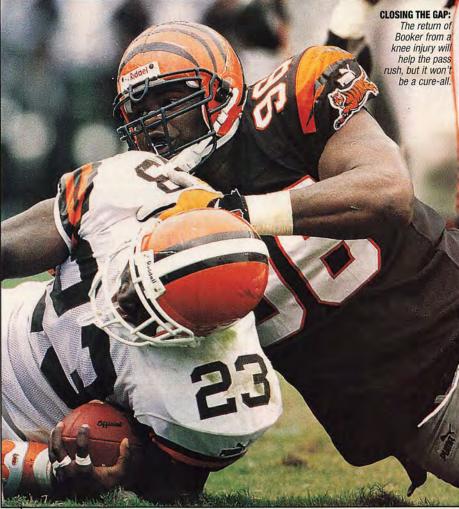
DT: The Bengals need to add another quality player to this unit—a tough scenario to accept after the signings of Tom Barndt and Oliver Gibson the past two offseasons. But the team finished next-to-last in the league against the run last year. The team could select Georgia's Richard Seymour in the first round. Or, it could wait until the second round and still pick up Georgia's Marcus Stroud or Texas' Casey Hampton. Any of the three could start right away.

G: Left guard is a position of concern.

Matt O'Dwyer, who finished the year on injured reserve, was to become an unrestricted free agent. If he leaves, the team would be left with Scott Rehberg as the starter and undrafted free agent Roger Roesler as the only backup for both guard positions. If the Bengals look for a guard, they probably could wait until the third or fourth round, where a player like Boston College's Paul Zukauskas might still be available.

C: The team is concerned that Rick Braham, an unrestricted free agent, doesn't have much left in his tank and that Brock Gutierrez is no better than a backup. The Bengals need to address the future of the position in the middle rounds, where there should be a couple of solid centers available. Arizona's Bruce Wiggins and Virginia Tech's Matt Lehr are two underrated prospects the team might look into adding, at least for depth.

CB: The team has squandered too many picks and too much money on this position for it to be so unproductive. Rodney Heath and Charles Fisher finished the year on injured reserve, but they were disappointing even when healthy. After being handed the job in the preseason, veteran Tom Carter played himself out of the starting lineup. The only bright spot was the play of rookies Robert Bean and Mark Roman, but it's doubtful either will be ready to start this



season. The player who must emerge as a solid cover corner is Artrell Hawkins. He has done nothing but disappoint the coaching staff the past three seasons, so this could be his last opportunity to make a place for himself on this defense. The Bengals probably won't use a late-round pick on a cornerback, as they already have too many bodies at the position, but if the opportunity presents itself in the second round to pick a player like Ohio State's Nate Clements, the team might do it. WR: Assuming Darnay Scott makes a healthy return from a leg injury that cost him the entire season, the Bengals still would like to add another receiver with good height who could give them a better look inside the red zone. Don't be shocked if Cincinnati uses its third- or fourth-round pick to take a taller receiver such as Tennessee's David Martin, who has a lot of upside but will need time to develop.

LB: The team needs depth at every spot in the unit. When Brian Simmons was lost for the season, the Bengals were forced to allow undrafted rookie Armegis Spearman to take over in the middle. The team would be smart to get rid of backups Billy Granville

OFFENSE			
Name and Address of the Owner, where the Party of the Owner, where the Party of the Owner, where the Owner, which is the Owner, wh		1	DEFENSE
Akili Smith	LE		Vaughn Booker
Scott Mitchell*			Michael Bankston
■ Nick Williams	LT		Oliver Gibson
Clif Groce		ш	Glen Steele
■ Corey Dillon*	RT		John Copeland
■ Michael Basnight			Tom Barndt
■ Damay Scott	RE		Jevon Langford
Danny Farmer			Reinard Wilson
Peter Warrick	LLB		Steve Foley
Craig Yeast			Canute Curtis
Tony McGee	MLB		Brian Simmons
Marco Battaglia			Armegis Spearma
■ John Jackson*	RLB		Takeo Spikes
Rod Jones			Adrian Ross
■ Matt O'Dwyer*	LC		Mark Roman
Scott Rehberg			Tom Carter
■ Rich Braham*	SS		Chris Carter
■ Brock Gutierrez			Cory Hall
Mike Goff	FS		Darryl Williams
Jamain Stephens			Tremain Mack
■ Willie Anderson	RC		Robert Bean
Jamain Stephens			Artrell Hawkins
Neil Rackers	P		Daniel Pope
	Nick Williams Clif Groce Corey Dillon* Michael Basnight Damay Scott Danny Farmer Peter Warrick Craig Yeast Tony McGee Marco Battaglia John Jackson* Rod Jones Matt O'Dwyer* Scott Rehberg Rich Braham* Brock Gutierrez Mike Goff Jamain Stephens Willie Anderson Jamain Stephens	Nick Williams Clif Groce Corey Dillon* Michael Basnight Damay Scott Danny Farmer Peter Warrick Craig Yeast Tony McGee Marco Battaglia John Jackson* Rd Rod Jones Matt O'Dwyer* Scott Rehberg Rich Braham* SS Brock Gutierrez Mike Goff Jamain Stephens Willie Anderson Jamain Stephens	Nick Williams Clif Groce Corey Dillon* Michael Basnight Damay Scott Danny Farmer Peter Warrick Craig Yeast Tony McGee Marco Battaglia John Jackson* RLB Rod Jones Matt O'Dwyer* Scott Rehberg Rich Braham* Brock Gutierrez Mike Goff Jamain Stephens Willie Anderson Jamain Stephens

and Adrian Ross. Ross was to become a restricted free agent and was likely to return, but he and Granville, who also was a free agent, are just marginal special teams players. Don't expect the Bengals to take a bigname player. Instead, they probably will pick a minimum-salary player, like Kansas' Chaz Murphy, who could be acquired with a sixthor seventh-round pick to help on special

THE OUTLOOK

For a team that has picked near the top for the past five years, the Bengals still have a lot of glaring needs to address. The defensive line certainly will get attention, especially at end, where Cincinnati likely will use its first pick (fourth overall) to land an impact pass rusher. Whether Corey Dillon returns or not, do not expect the team to use a high pick on a running back; it has Michael Basnight, Brandon Bennett and Curtis Keaton available to plug the hole.

Overall, expect a heavy emphasis on the trenches. Coach Dick LeBeau wants to establish a more physical presence on both sides of the line. It wouldn't be a surprise if Cincinnati used four or five picks on offensive and defensive linemen. With a stable of running backs, a young secondary, a gifted though thin linebacking corps and a young but talented receiving corps, the Bengals are a few big-time players on the lines away from becoming competitive. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Peter Warrick, WR

Only true playmaker team has at wide receiver. A future star.

2. Mark Roman, CB

Finished season as starter but will have to fight to keep job.

3. Ron Dugans, WR

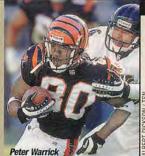
Struggled in transition to NFL. Was team's No. 3 receiver.

4. Curtis Keaton, RB

Took advantage of early playing time but is third-down back only.

5. Robert Bean, CB

Was in and out of starting lineup toward end of the season.



6. Neil Rackers, K

Will need more consistency to have lengthy NFL career.

7. Brad St. Louis, TE

Earned and kept roster spot with his long-snapping ability

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

This franchise has had too many top picks during the past five years to be in the lousy position it finds itself. The Bengals have one of the league's worst secondaries despite using many of their picks on those positions. Overlooking

the character of players has cost

this team dearly.

4					
Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	7	7	9	9	7
Starters	1	1	4	2	1
Backups	3	3	2	3	6
Other team	1	1	1	0	0
Out of NFL	2	2	2	4	0

BENGALS WAR ROOM

This is a unique organization in terms of front-office structure. Cincinnati has the smallest scouting department in the NFL, with president/general manager Mike Brown and brother Pete, vice president of player personnel, relying almost entirely on the coaching staff to make personnel decisions. The few scouts the organization does have simply gather information and write reports to prepare the coaches for the evaluation process after the season. The position coaches individually evaluate and work out the players at their positions, and they have a great deal of input on draft day. However, because coaching staffs change so frequently and many NFL coaches are not great talent evaluators, there often is a lack of consistency in terms of having the personnel to match the on-field philosophy. The team has a reputation for being tightfisted with its money, which makes it difficult to attract quality free agents or retain its marquee players. The Bengals perennially pick near the top of the draft, but they don't always have the results to show for it. They are not an organization that will be very creative or gamble on draft day. The team is likely to stay where it is and take the best player available.

TEAM NEEDS

RB: Errict Rhett missed most of last season with a foot injury, but it's doubtful he would have made much of a difference anyway. The team got some production from rookie Travis Prentice, but he's clearly not the every-down answer. The team got its quarterback and top pass rusher with the No. 1 overall pick in the past two drafts. With this draft's third overall pick, it could select versatile Mississippi back Deuce McAllister, who would give the team a bona fide rushing threat and a huge weapon for Tim Couch in the passing game.

DT: The Browns finished last in the NFL against the run last season, with the problems stemming from this position. The personnel does not seem to fit the scheme. Orpheus Rove and Stalin Colinet are too undersized to hold up against the run. In fact, the line's only natural inside player is Darius Holland. Roye would be more productive if he had some help against the run in the middle, which is why the Browns need to draft a run-stuffing tackle or pick one up in free agency. Assuming that Cleveland uses its top pick to draft a back or receiver, the

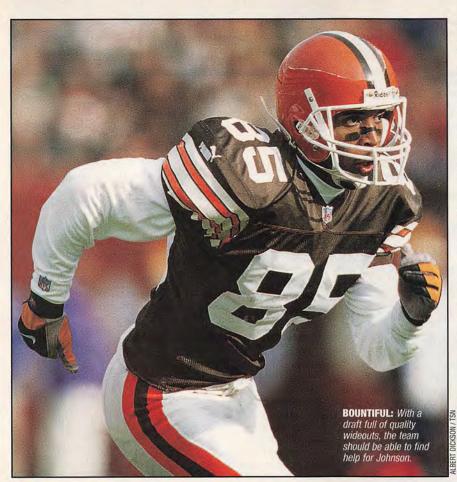
second-round pick could be used to draft a big. physical tackle like Texas' Casey Hampton or Florida's Derrick Chambers.

OT: The unfortunate circumstances surrounding Orlando Brown's eye injury will haunt this team until he returns or it finds a successor on the right side. James Brown has yet to develop into the player the Browns figured he would become. Steve Zahursky is penciled in as the starter, but he's not the long-term answer. Cleveland could wait until the third round to draft a player like North Carolina State's Jarvis Borum, who has the potential to be a starter on the right side for years to come.

WR: The team needs a legitimate No. 2 receiver to reduce the number of doubleteams No. 1 Kevin Johnson faces on a weekly basis. Dennis Northcutt, David Patten, Darrin Chiaverini and Jajuan Dawson are good in the Nos. 3, 4 and 5 slots, but none of them is ready to take over the starting receiver position opposite Johnson. There also was a good chance that Patten, the team's best deep threat, would draw interest in free agency. If the Browns don't use their first pick to draft Michigan's David Terrell or NC State's Koren

DDOLLECTED DEDTH CHART

	PRUJECIED	UEFIL	LUNKI
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Tim Couch	LE I	Courtney Brown
	Ty Detmer		Tyrone Rogers
FB	Marc Edwards*	LT .	Orpheus Roye
	Tarek Saleh*		Darius Holland
RB	Errict Rhett	RT I	Stalin Colinet*
	Travis Prentice		Mike Thompson*
WR	Kevin Johnson	RE I	Keith McKenzie
	Darrin Chiaverini		Arnold Miller
WR	David Patten*	SLB	Jamir Miller
	Bobby Brown		Rahim Abdullah
TE	Aaron Shea	MLB	Wali Rainer
	Mark Campbell		Marty Moore
J	Roman Oben	WLB	Marty Moore
	Roger Chanoine		Jamir Miller
.G	Steve Zahursky	LC	Corey Fuller
	Brad Bedell		Lewis Sanders
)	Shaun O'Hara	SS	Marquis Smith
	Everett Lindsay	and the same of	Earl Little
RG	Everett Lindsay	FS I	Percy Ellsworth
	Brad Bedell		Rashidi Barnes
RT.	James Brown*	RC	Daylon McCutcheor
<	Steve Zahursky		Lewis Sanders
	Phil Dawson	P	Chris Gardocki



RECENT HISTORY **2000 DRAFT**

1. Courtney Brown, DE A future star at his position. Browns picked the right player.

2. Dennis Northcutt, WR Showed some flashes but needs to be more consistent.

3a. Travis Prentice, RB Wore out late in season after starting for much of it.

3b. JaJuan Dawson, WR Injuries cost him most of season, but team loves his talent.

4a. Lewis Sanders, CB Emerged as a nickel corner and has talent to be starter.

4b. Aaron Shea, TE Won starting job and should become a mainstay at position.

5a. Anthony Malbrough, CB Experienced some bumps as a rookie but has lots of promise.

5b. Lamar Chapman, CB Has talent but faces uphill climb in bid to start.

6a. Spergon Wynn, QB Played some due to injuries. No better than No. 3 at present.

6b. Brad Bedell, G Will have to fight to earn roster spot as a reserve.

7a. Manuia Savea, G Cut before the season began. 7b. Eric Chandler, DT

Cut before the season began. 7c. Rashidi Barnes, DB Better than expected. Should keep job as a backup FS.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

After just two years of drafting, it's tough to criticize or compliment the Browns' ability to evaluate talent. So far the team has done well in terms of drafting both quality and quantity. QB Tim Couch and WR Kevin Johnson were solid picks. It's too soon to judge the mid- and late-round picks.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	NA	NA	NA	11	13
Starters	NA	NA	NA	5	2
Backups	NA	NA	NA	3	9
Other team	NA	NA	NA	1	0
Out of NFL	NA	NA	NA	2	2

BROWNS WAR ROOM

With new coach Butch Davis in place, it will be interesting to see how the power structure unfolds in the Cleveland front office. It is likely CEO Carmen Policy, director of football operations Dwight Clark and director of player personnel Joe Collins will continue to make personnel decisions, but Davis obviously will have a great deal of input into draft and free-agency decisions. It seems the biggest change in power will be felt by Clark, who will take more of a back seat in personnel decisions to allow Davis a more hands-on role than that of former coach Chris Palmer. Because Davis has been away from the pro game for several years, it may take him a little time to catch up, but the Browns are paying him too much for him not to have a strong voice. Cleveland has a strong scouting staff overall, with a special emphasis on pro personnel, and it is as prepared as any other team for free agency. As a recent expansion team, it almost has lost its window of opportunity to make up ground on other teams with extra picks. But with a talent base that still is lacking, the Browns must make every acquisition count. They have a thorough and organized front office, and they likely will quietly upgrade this roster through free agency and the draft.

Robinson, they could use a middle-round pick to add some size to the group with a receiver such as Eastern Kentucky's Alex Bannister or Arkansas' Eddie "Boo" Williams. FB: Both starter Marc Edwards and backup Tarek Saleh are unrestricted free agents, but the staff hinted that Edwards would not be asked back. Saleh may not be ready to take over the starting job, which is why the team may need to acquire a player who is better suited to catching the ball out of the backfield. Players such as Illinois' Jameel Cook or TCU's George Layne would give Couch a huge boost of confidence in the passing game without costing the club a high-round pick. G: Jim Pyne and Everett Lindsay are not the future of the position. Both are injury-prone, and a young team like the Browns needs to add some young, quality depth. Former coach Chris Palmer and his staff liked what they saw in Noel Lamontagne and Brad Bedell, but with a new staff in place, the team instead could choose to improve its depth with a fourth- or fifth-round pick used on a player such as TCU's Michael Keathley or Oklahoma's Scott Kempenich.

LB: It's certainly not a top need, but the Browns could use some more depth across the board at linebacker. Outside starters Jamir Miller and Marty Moore and middle linebacker Wali Rainer seemed to wear down last vear. Weakside linebacker Lenov Jones' late-season knee injury and Rahim Abdullah's poor play handcuffed the unit at times. It looks as if the team may need to unload Abdullah, and Miller and Moore are not getting any younger. Using a third- or fourthround pick to acquire a solid backup with versatility, such as Texas A&M's Roylin Bradley, would be a wise decision.

THE OUTLOOK

The Browns will have a tough decision to make with the third overall pick. McAllister, Terrell and Robinson might all be available, leaving the organization with the option of drafting an explosive running back or playmaking receiver. Because of the excess of wide receivers, it wouldn't be a surprise if Cleveland chose McAllister, which eventually would lead to Rhett's departure.

After that, the Browns must add some bulk to their defensive line, which they ought to be able to do in the second round. They also need to add a few players to an ailing and aging offensive line. If Cleveland gets its playmaker in the first round and a physical defensive tackle in the second round, its next couple of picks could be offensive linemen.

The team could stand to upgrade at the guard position, but it will probably go after a capable right tackle with a third- or fourthround pick. And because neither Edwards nor Saleh has exceptional blocking or receiving skills, the Browns might look to start over at the position by drafting a more athletic fullback with a middle-round pick. But with just seven picks in this year's draft (they had 13 in 2000, 11 in 1999), the Browns can't afford to be as free-wheeling as they have been. - The War Room



DT: Injuries displaced starters Chad Hennings (neck) in late October and Leon Lett (knee) shortly thereafter. But a close look reveals that even before those two players were lost, the Cowboys couldn't stop anybody on the ground. Dallas has some speed on the edges, but its undersized tackles made for a terrible combination and led to a leagueworst ranking in run defense. The team doesn't have a first-round pick. so the earliest chance it will have to draft a defensive tackle will be the second round. when a player such as Alabama's Kenny Smith or Texas' Casey Hampton might still be around.

QB: Troy Aikman

battled back trouble and multiple concussions last season. It's possible the future Hall of Famer will walk away from the game this offseason. Such a move would leave the team with 38-year-old Randall Cunningham and the inexperienced Anthony Wright. Owner Jerry Jones is well aware that an upgrade at quarterback is in order. However, he still feels his team can compete with what it has. So if Aikman returns, don't expect the Cowboys to pick up a quarterback early. But a developmental guy, such as Bart Hendricks of Boise State, might be a good pick.

CB: The Cowboys finished the season with the NFL's No. 3 pass defense, due in great part to their woes stopping the run. Veteran Phillippi Sparks was signed just before the start of the season to improve a secondary suffering from the poor play of rookie Kareem Larrimore. Sparks was solid for the duration (he had a team-leading five interceptions), and Larrimore improved after the change was made. Nevertheless, Ryan McNeil will be 31 in October and Sparks isn't the long-term answer on the

right side. Probably the biggest disappointment of the season was rookie Mario Edwards, who had a terrible time making the adjustment to the pro game. Look for coach Dave Campo to go back to the drawing board in this draft. The team would benefit from selecting a player such as Utah's Andre Dyson.

OT: Larry Allen enjoyed another Pro Bowl season at left guard, but Erik Williams, his longtime line mate, showed signs of age at right tackle. Williams was extremely streaky in 2000. The 10-year veteran was a liability facing stunts and continued to have difficulty putting together four quarters of solid effort. Does Williams have another year or so left? Possibly. Is it time for Dallas to start grooming a replacement? Definitely. The Cowboys wouldn't be making a mistake if they used a pick on Florida State's Char-ron Dorsey. Dorsey has some flaws in his game, but he's a talented tackle. Hudson Houck is one of the NFL's best offensive line coaches. His ability to bring along young talent could spawn the selection of a project such as Dorsey.

ILB: Last season, undersized linemen and undersized linebackers led to an incompetent run defense. In the middle, Barron Wortham proved to be the lesser of two evils when he won the job from Dat Nguyen early in the season. Wortham was solid, but the former Titans player just wasn't the force Dallas needed to complement outside starters Dexter Coakley and Darren Hambrick. Look for the Cowboys to try to find a throwback type who can shut down the run. Oregon's Matt Smith is a hard-nosed guy who could really improve the Cowboys' porous run defense.

RB: Chris Warren's attitude problems and inconsistent play led to his exodus with three games left in the 2000 season. In Warren's place, Michael Wiley failed to pick up the slack. Even though Emmitt Smith continued to play well despite his age and physical limitations, improvements are needed. Not only do the Cowboys need a capable backup, but it's also time to start grooming a starter for the future. Through the draft, expect Dallas to obtain a back such as Bo Carroll. The Florida product is extremely talented, and he's somebody the Cowboys could get late.

K: Dallas really needs help at kicker. Tim Seder ranked 20th overall in the league in field-goal percentage last season. He missed seven attempts inside 50 yards, and his poor accuracy and distance cost his team a couple of games. Despite Oakland's firstround selection of Sebastian Janikowski last year, kicker usually isn't a position teams address early in the draft. If Dallas takes a chance on a kicker such as Houston's Mike

DDOLECTED DEDTH CHART

	PRUJECIEDI	UEPII	1 CHAKI
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Troy Aikman	LE I	Alonzo Spellman
	Anthony Wright		■ Ebenezer Ekuban
FB	Robert Thomas	LT I	Leon Lett*
	Troy Hambrick		Brandon Noble
RB	Emmitt Smith	RT I	Chad Hennings
	Troy Hambrick		Michael Myers
WR	Rocket Ismail	RE I	Greg Ellis
	James McKnight*		Ebenezer Ekuban
WR	Joey Galloway	WLB I	Dexter Coakley*
	Jason Tucker	1	Orantes Grant
TE	David LaFleur	MLB I	■ Barron Wortham*
	Jackie Harris		Dat Nguyen
LT	■ Flozell Adams	SLB I	Darren Hambrick
	Larry Allen	1	Joe Bowden
LG	Larry Allen	LC I	Phillippi Sparks
	Jorge Diaz		Kareem Larrimore
C	Mark Stepnoski	SS	Darren Woodson
-	Ben Fricke	factories.	Greg Myers*
RG	Solomon Page	FS I	George Teague
	Jorge Diaz		Izell Reese
RT	Erik Williams	RC I	Ryan McNeil
	Solomon Page	1	Mario Edwards
K	Tim Seder	PI	Micah Knorr
	Can play for any		Solid player
	Fringe player *U	nrestricte	ed free agent.

Clark, it will be late in the draft. Dallas should look to upgrade this area, because Seder has proved he isn't the answer.

THE OUTLOOK

The Cowboys are searching for their draft identity right now. Former coach Jimmy Johnson liked to stockpile picks by trading one or two early selections for a bunch of mid- to late-round picks. Johnson lived by the maxim that there was speed and talent available in the later rounds, and that thinking earned Dallas three Super Bowl trophies in the early '90s.

But since Johnson departed after the 1993 season, the Cowboys have been unable to acquire good players through the draft, and their suspect decisions were all too evident last season. Dallas enters the 2001 draft with glaring weaknesses at several positions, but you can bet defense will take precedence. Still, the fact that Aikman is in the final stage of his career and Emmitt Smith will be 32 when next season starts can't be overlooked.

The defensive line must be addressed first. Campo also will have to improve his secondary, starting at cornerback.

Quarterback should get some attention, but that should happen late in the draft. And with Williams starting to show signs of slowing down, look for the team to add some depth at offensive tackle. —The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

2. Dwayne Goodrich, CB
Took some time to develop. His
only production came late.

4. Kareem Larrimore, CB

Began 2000 as starter but lost job. Still was pleasant surprise.

5. Michael Wiley, RB

Saw time in third-down role but only after Warren was cut.

6. Mario Edwards, DB

A complete bust early but showed some promise late.

7. Orantes Grant, LB

Did little at linebacker but had some success on special teams



FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The team used the draft to build a small dynasty early in the 1990s, but the it has lacked direction since Jimmy Johnson departed. In recent years, Dallas has pursued speed with its picks. In the process, it has overlooked other critical aspects of the game, such as football instincts.

'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
9	9	9	8	5
0	1	3	1	0
0	1	2	6	5
2	2	2	1	0
7	5	2	0	0
	9 0 0	9 9 0 1 0 1 2 2	9 9 9 0 1 3 0 1 2 2 2 2	9 9 9 8 0 1 3 1 0 1 2 6 2 2 2 1

COWBOYS WAR ROOM

In the truest sense of the role, owner Jerry Jones is the organization's personnel director. He watches film, attends all-star games and player workouts, and takes a lot of pride in his ability to evaluate players. Dallas has an unusual front-office structure. Although the division of responsibilities is clear within the organization, on the outside it is somewhat difficult to tell who is responsible for what. However, this is a veteran group that has been together a long time. Coach Dave Campo has moderate input into the draft, but he and Jones rely on a group of veteran assistant coaches for input on draft-day decisions, and the position coaches many times play huge roles in the players who are selected. The scouts primarily are information gatherers who do not have a lot of decision-making power, but they work well with the coaching staff and there is respect between both groups. If there is a fault with the Cowboys' draft philosophy, it may be that they make too many moves and roll the dice on too many occasions in an effort to upgrade their roster quickly. Jones loves to be a player on draft day, and while having the courage to make bold moves is admirable, there are times when the best move is no move.



TEAM NEEDS

CB: Age is catching up with a unit that allowed far too many big plays and offered little help in run support last season. Terrell Buckley was a nice late addition, but he might not be back. Veterans Ray Crockett and Jimmy Spencer won't be productive much longer, and Deltha O'Neal looks as though he might need another year to develop. As was the case last year when the team drafted O'Neal 15th overall, there aren't many polished cover men in this draft. If the Broncos don't take a receiver with their first-round pick, they could target Ohio State's Nate Clements or Mississippi's Ken Lucas to shore up their secondary.

WR: Receiving tandems don't come much better than Ed McCaffrey and Rod Smith, who each hit the century mark in receptions last season. But the most glaring weakness on offense is the lack of depth at wide receiver. The Robert Brooks experiment was a bust, and Travis McGriff didn't establish himself when the opportunity presented itself. Chris Cole's speed is intriguing, and youngsters such as Muneer Moore still have a chance, but adding

a third guy who is ready to play is a must. Luckily for the Broncos, they should be able to get some immediate help in the draft. There is a group of elite players, led by Michigan's David Terrell, that likely will be gone by the time the team selects 24th overall. But players such as Clemson's Rod Gardner, UCLA's Freddie Mitchell and Wisconsin's Chris Chambers all are options for late in Round 1 if the Broncos opt to pick a receiver over a cornerback.

G: The retirement of assistant head coach Alex Gibbs will be the most significant loss for the offensive line, but it won't be the only one. Left guard Mark Schlereth is all but gone. Lennie Friedman is prepared to step in at the position. Free agent Dan Neil wants to return, but the team must accommodate his needs. Releasing a developmental player such as Richard Mercier late in the season was a questionable move; he would have at least provided some competition in camp. As for a prospect, keep an eye out for TCU's Michael Keathley.

OT: The offseason release of veteran LT Tony Jones elevated Trey Teague to a starting role and made Cooper Carlisle his backup. That simply isn't good enough. The Broncos histori-

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	LUNITORED F	LLL	Ш	UIIANI
	OFFENSE		E	DEFENSE
QB	Brian Griese	LE		Maa Tanuvasa
	Gus Frerotte*			Lester Archambea
FB	■ Howard Griffith*	LT		Keith Traylor
	Detron Smith			Mike Lodish*
RB	■ Terrell Davis	RT		Trevor Pryce
	Mike Anderson			Montae Reagor
WR	Rod Smith	RE		Kavika Pittman
	Travis McGriff		-	Harald Hasselbach
WR	■ Ed McCaffrey	WLB		John Mobley*
	Scottie Montgomery			lan Gold
TE	Dwayne Carswell	MLB		Al Wilson
	Desmond Clark			Keith Burns
LT	Trey Teague	SLB		Bill Romanowski
	Cooper Carlisle			Glenn Cadrez
LG	Mark Schlereth*	LC		Jimmy Spencer
	Lennie Friedman			Ray Crockett
C	Tom Nalen	SS		Billy Jenkins
	K.C. Jones*			Kenoy Kennedy
RG	■ Dan Neil*	FS		Eric Brown
	Tom Nalen		H	George Coghill
RT	Matt Lepsis	RC		Terrell Buckley*
	None			Deltha O'Neal
K	Jason Elam	P		Tom Rouen

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

cally have done a tremendous job of locating trench talent in the middle stages of the draft. Players to keep an eye are Nebraska's Russ Hochstein and Villanova's Stan Bennett.

DT: Locking up Trevor Pryce before the season was a smart move, but this unit needs more work. Keith Traylor played too soft in 2000; he needs to crank his intensity up a notch to be effective next year. The club needs Montae Reagor or Jerry Johnson to assert himself as a reliable member of the rotation next season. There has been speculation that the team is trying to acquire John Randle from the Vikings, but until that move materializes, the Broncos must bank on help from the draft. A couple of players the team might consider in the second round are Texas' Casey Hampton and Florida's Derrick

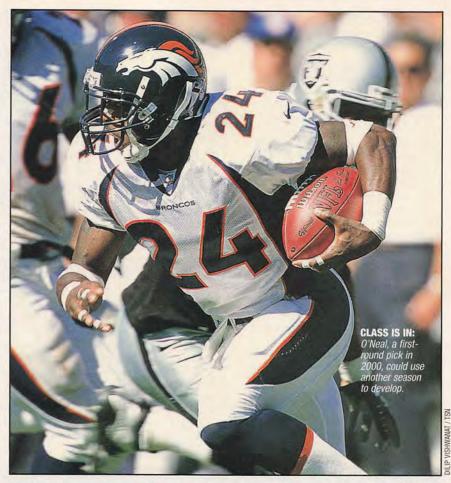
DE: The team lacked a consistent pass rush last season, especially off the edges. Starters Maa Tanuvasa and Kavika Pittman were solid, but they didn't produce enough big plays. Harald Hasselbach showed some ability later in the season, but ex-Falcon Lester Archambeau proved a bad fit from the day camp opened in July. The Broncos did what they thought was necessary by parting ways with David Bowens last offseason. However, they're now faced with the task of replacing the promising nickel rush end. There are some undersized players on the roster that fit the Bowens mold, but most of them are considered projects at this point. Unless they defy past tendencies and reach for pass-rush help on the first day, the Broncos will be picking from a group that includes Oregon State's DeLawrence Grant and Florida State's David Warren.

TE: This isn't a glaring need, but the possible loss of Byron Chamberlain in free agency would leave the Broncos a little thin depth-wise. Dwayne Carswell has kept his starting job because he's the only competent in-line blocker of the group, but he's not getting any younger. Desmond Clark has shown some big-play flair in the passing game, and it would be tough for a rookie to unseat him in that role.

THE OUTLOOK

One good reason this team has remained competitive through the years has nothing to do with John Elway. Although the future Hall of Fame quarterback was responsible for many wins, the Broncos have enjoyed great success because of the underrated job done by their scouting staff. The Broncos are in pretty good shape, but they do have some minor work to do before camp opens in July. One of the top priorities is adding another weapon at receiver for quarterback Brian Griese.

Because they made the playoffs, the Broncos don't have great ammunition in the first round, but that could change dramatically if they decide to dangle running back Olandis Gary as trade bait. Such a move could help them move up in the first round or land them another pick in the first three rounds. The team also will look to load up on defense. It doesn't have deep enough pockets to chase after big-name free agents, so it must use its picks wisely to add at least two players of starting caliber for coordinator Ray Rhodes' unit. - The War Room



RECENT HISTORY **2000 DRAFT**

1. Deltha O'Neal, CB

Saw little time at corner. Did contribute as kick returner. 2a. lan Gold, LB

Playing time increased as season progressed. A future starter. 2b. Kenoy Kennedy, S

Aggressive run supporter who will compete for free safety job. 3. Chris Cole, WR

The team's fastest receiver wasn't a factor as a rookie.

4a. Jerry Johnson, DT Showed some promise as a backup. Role could increase

4b. Cooper Carlisle, OT Needs huge camp to secure

spot on new-look offensive line. 5. Muneer Moore, WR Spent season on IR. Could be

team's No. 5 receiver if healthy. 6. Mike Anderson, RB

Had huge season. Will share workload with Davis. 7a. Jarious Jackson, QB

Emergency QB who played a bit when Griese was injured.

7b. Leroy Fields, WR Was released in July. Did not play in NFL last season.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The late-round trio of RBs Terrell Davis (sixth round), Olandis Gary (fourth) and Mike Anderson (sixth) has overshadowed other solid work by Denver with its picks. The Broncos have addressed both sides of the ball with equal effectiveness. QB Brian Griese was a genius pick.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	12	3	7	12	10
Starters	1	2	3	1	0
Backups	1	0	0	6	9
Other team	4	0	2	4	0
Out of NFL	6	1	2	1	1

BRONCOS WAR ROOM

The Broncos' front office is one of the best in the NFL, but it does not have a strong identity in terms of big personnel names. The members of the staff go about their jobs quietly and are very organized, due in part to the involvement of coach Mike Shanahan, a hands-on type of evaluator who is heavily involved in all personnel decisions. Like 49ers great Bill Walsh, Shanahan has a great handle on the big picture, and he relies on his coaches and scouts to provide him with the proper information to make smart decisions. Although the Broncos have picked at the bottom of the first round many times in the last several years because of their success on the field, they have done a nice job of maintaining a quality roster and they are especially good at finding gems in the middle to late rounds. (How do running backs Terrell Davis and Mike Anderson, both sixth-round picks, and undrafted offensive tackle Matt Lepsis sound for quality lowround picks?) The Broncos have a strong system in place. They know exactly what they want in a player. putting a premium on athleticism and playmaking ability. The positional coaches have moderate input, but Shanahan is the ultimate decision-maker, and he seems to relish the role.

DETROIT

TEAM NEEDS

DE: This was the biggest area of disappointment last season. Robert Porcher still can play, but he needs to rediscover the fire he lost after signing a huge contract last offseason. He vowed to new team president Matt Millen that he would take a more intense approach next season. Jared DeVries can stuff the run at end or tackle. Tracy Scroggins started fast but tailed off badly in the second half of the season, and the team needs to get someone to push him for his starting job in camp. James Hall, who displayed some pass-rush ability as a rookie, is not the guy. The Lions won't have a shot at top pass-rush prospects such as Florida State's Jamal Reynolds or Missouri's Justin Smith, but intriguing players should be around late in the second and third rounds. If the team decides to take a defensive end on the draft's first day. look for it to be someone such as California's Andre Carter or Alabama's Kenny Smith.

G: The team simply can't afford to lose Jeff Hartings in free agency. He has been its steadiest offensive lineman the past few years, and his loss would be a crushing blow to this sieve-like unit. Also, regardless of what happens to part-time guard Mike Compton in free agency, left guard needs to be addressed. Tony Semple is a decent backup, but he's in way over his head as a starter. The team could move Stockar McDougle inside, but that would create a need at left tackle. Michigan's Steve Hutchinson would only have to make the short drive from Ann Arbor if the Lions decide he's their guy, but picking him would cost the team a first-round pick. If they don't take someone such as Hutchinson early, look for the Lions to focus heavily on this position in the middle rounds.

CB: Bryant Westbrook played at a Pro Bowl level all season, but his Achilles' tendon injury scares the team. It's difficult for a cornerback to bounce back from that type of injury. Westbrook is far and away the team's best cover man. Undersized Terry Fair is adequate but would be a better fit at nickel back. Reserves Lamar Campbell, Darnell Walker and Marquis Walker did excellent jobs when pressed into more prominent roles, but the team needs to add a young player here. It's time to give up on injury-plagued Kevin Abrams. There aren't many polished corners in this year's draft, but either Tennessee State's Ligarius Jennings or Arizona State's Nijrell Eason certainly would be a nice player to

QB: The majority of Charlie Batch's problems stem from inadequate protection. The

long-term deal he signed before last season essentially locks him into the starting job. It will be interesting to see whether new coach Marty Mornhinweg will have the same effect on Batch that he did on Jeff Garcia in San Francisco. The real need here is for a competent backup. Neither Mike Tomczak nor Stoney Case is the answer, and the Lions can't afford to go into another season without a quality player behind their brittle starter. Some inside the organization feel that Cory Sauter should be given a legitimate shot behind Batch, but that shouldn't prevent the team from tabbing a project such as Nebraska-Kearney's Justin Coleman in the later rounds.

S: Free safety Kurt Schulz proved to be a wise pickup, as his leadership and experience were huge

assets in the secondary. The Lions can get by with Ron Rice at strong safety, but he is not the long-term solution. Mornhinweg has gone on record as saying that his team needs more impact players, so why not start at a position that can be upgraded in the second or third round? Rice was an undrafted free agent coming out of college, and good scouting should land a player with better skills. Special teams performer Kywin Supernaw played well when pressed into the starting lineup, but he's more of a backup type. Corwin Brown is a perfect veteran reserve, but a late-season knee injury clouds his future. A player such as Notre Dame's Tony Driver has the skills and raw ability for which this coaching staff is looking.

THE OUTLOOK

The much-anticipated first draft of the Millen era likely will be methodical and devoid of any fireworks. Millen and personnel man Bill Tobin don't have any huge holes to fill, but upgrades are needed at



ISS DETTMAN FOR TSN

	PRUJECIED L	JEP ITI L	NAKI
	OFFENSE	DE	FENSE
QB	■ Charlie Batch	LE Ro	bert Porcher
	Stoney Case*	Ja	mes Hall
FB	Cory Schlesinger*	LT 🔳 Lu	ther Elliss
	Brock Olivo	_ Tra	avis Kirschke
RB	James Stewart		mes Jones
	Mario Bates*		lvin Pritchett
WR	■ Germane Crowell		acy Scroggins*
	Herman Moore		red DeVries
WR	Johnnie Morton		iris Claiborne
	Brian Stablein*	PARTICIPATION OF THE PARTY.	rrett Green
TE	■ David Sloan		ephen Boyd
	Walter Rasby*	100	nt Kriewaldt
LT	■ Stockar McDougle		en Aldridge
	Ray Roberts	the same of the sa	ott Kowalkowski
LG	Tony Semple*		yant Westbrook
	Kerlin Blaise		mar Campbell
C	■ Mike Compton*		n Rice
200	Eric Beverly		win Supernaw
RG	Jeff Hartings*		irt Schulz
DT	Andy Vincent	-	an Stewart*
RT	Aaron Gibson		my Fair
12	Barrett Brooks*		arquis Walker*
K	Jason Hanson	P 📕 Jo	hn Jett

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

DOCUMENTED DEDTH CHART

some critical positions along the offensive and defensive lines.

For Batch to make progress under Mornhinweg, the Lions need to shore up their protection problems. If the team's brain trust decides to address the offensive line in the first round, look for it to take the best player available.

The flexibility that McDougle, last year's No. 1 pick, provides will allow the Lions to ignore specific guard or tackle classifications.

Unlike some of the other teams in the NFC Central, the Lions could go in a number of directions in the first round. Aside from the offensive line, the other glaring need is cornerback, where Westbrook's future is clouded by his injury. Although there aren't many topflight cover men in this class, the Lions would be smart to protect themselves in case Westbrook's rehabilitation hits a snag.

Because this is Millen's first time in charge of a draft, it might be most instructive to use Tobin's past record with the Bears and Colts as a means of predicting what the Lions will do. In his previous two stops, Tobin wasn't a real risk taker and usually opted to stay put and let the draft come to him. Because Tobin got a bit of a late start on this year's crop, don't look for him to shake things up when the Lions are on the clock. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Stockar McDougle, OL Played three positions. Future appears to be at left tackle.

2. Barrett Green, LB

Battled injuries. Could assume duties as nickel 'backer in 2001.

3. Reuben Droughns, RB Injured as rookie. Will get every

opportunity to win backup job.

5. Todd Franz, CB

Cut in August. Spent part of year on Saints' practice squad.

6. Quinton Reese, DL

Cut by Lions in August. Did not catch on with another team.



7. Alfonso Boone, DL Bears poached him off Lions' practice squad in November.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

Draft decisions were made by a committee in the past, and it worked well. Although inconsistent on the field, this team has been one of the best off the field when it comes to evaluating college talent. The only knock here is not enough impact players. Maybe Matt Millen can change that.

		-		
'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
5	10	5	7	6
1	1	3	2	0
1	1	0	3	3
0	0	1	1	2
3	8	1	1	1
	5 1 1 0	5 10 1 1 1 1 0 0	5 10 5 1 1 3 1 1 0 0 0 1	5 10 5 7 1 1 3 2 1 1 0 3 0 0 1 1

LIONS WAR ROOM

The organization may take some time to get a proper handle on its identity and overall philosophy. However, one thing is clear: Team president Matt Millen is running the show, and what he lacks in personnel experience he will make up for in aggressiveness and discipline. Millen has hired NFL veteran Bill Tobin (who previously headed up scouting departments in Chicago and Indianapolis) to run the Lions' personnel department, and new head coach Marty Mornhinweg will bring with him solid experience from the 49ers. Millen will have to lean on his personnel experts, as he has no experience running the draft or guiding an organization through free agency. Look for the Lions to take an approach that mirrors Millen's qualities as a player, putting a premium on toughness, aggressiveness and overachievers. The organization likely will not take a lot of chances or go out on a limb with talented but unreliable players. Millen appears to be a guy who will listen to input from all of his scouts and coaches. If that holds true, the organization should have high morale and the excitement of starting something new together with an already talented roster. That could translate into early success.

TEAM NEEDS

WR: Unless Antonio Freeman rededicates himself, he can't be counted on to be a top playmaker for this team. One thing is certain: Freeman no longer is among the elite at the position. Bill Schroeder had a nice season, but his best fit is still as a No. 3 outside receiver. Having Schroeder log time in the slot is counterproductive because he never will be the type of guy who makes tough catches over the middle. Corey Bradford was hurt all season and could be lost as a restricted free agent, which would leave only projects Donald Driver and Charles Lee. Driver and Lee have some of the vertical qualities the offense desperately needs, but they are extremely raw when it comes to the finer points of the position. Inside the organization, the consensus is this position must be addressed in the first round. Although they likely will miss out on Michigan's David Terrell and North Carolina State's Koren Robinson, the Packers would be ecstatic if Oregon State's Chad Johnson were available in the middle of Round 1.

DE: Vonnie Holliday fought injuries all sea-

son but was playing well toward the end of the year. John Thierry was a pleasant surprise early but faded as the season progressed. David Bowens impresses as a situational edge rusher, but the team needs an every-down player opposite Holliday. The lack of a pass rush put too much pressure on the secondary all season. With Bowens on board, look for the team to focus on bringing in a young player who can contribute significantly on first and second down. This year's defensive end class isn't a bumper crop. Possible picks include TCU's Aaron Schobel and Florida State's Roland Seymour. Both should be around when the Packers select in the second round. DT: Injuries hit the team hard here. Santana Dotson and rookie Steve Warren were lost with quadriceps injuries, and it's unclear how they will bounce back next season. Keep an eye on Cletidus Hunt, a third-round pick in '99. He's inconsistent, but he plays well enough in stretches to excite fans. Russell Maryland, who battles on every snap, doesn't have much left and likely will be around for only another year. Billy Lyon adds depth at a position that could use another guy who can

	PROJECTED I	DEPTH	CHART
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	■ Brett Favre	LE I	Vonnie Holliday
	Matt Hasselbeck		Billy Lyon
FB	William Henderson	NT	Russell Maryland
42.	Matt Snider		Billy Lyon
RB	Ahman Green	DT .	Santana Dotson
A Committee	Dorsey Levens		Cletidus Hunt
WR	■ Bill Schroeder	RE	John Thierry
	Corey Bradford		David Bowens
WR	Antonio Freeman	SLB .	Na'il Diggs
	Donald Driver		K.D. Williams
TE	Bubba Franks	MLB	Bernardo Harris
	Tyrone Davis*		Mike Morton*
LT	Chad Clifton	WLB	Nate Wayne
	Mike Wahle	-	None
LG	Ross Verba*	LC .	Mike McKenzie
	Mike Flanigan		Tod McBride
C	Frank Winters	SS	LeRoy Butler
	Mike Flanagan	-	Antuan Edwards
RG	Marco Rivera	FS 📕	Darren Sharper
	Barry Stokes		Scott McGarrahan
RT	Mark Tauscher	RC .	Tyrone Williams
(se	Barry Stokes		Allen Rossum
K	Ryan Longwell	P	Josh Bidwell
	Can play for any t Fringe player *Ur		Solid player I free agent.

collapse the pocket. Expect the Packers to go after a hidden gem on the draft's second day. Players with interesting upsides include TCU's Shawn Worthen and Mississippi State's Willie Blade.

G: The team moved Ross Verba inside to guard in training camp, and he was impressive there late in the season, especially in the finale against Tampa Bay. Verba's days with the Packers likely are over, as he will draw significant attention in the free-agent market. The team originally wanted Earl Dotson (back injury) to return in 2001 at right tackle, so Mark Tauscher could move inside to fill Verba's void. The team had to cut Dotson for salary cap reasons, but he hopes to remain with the Packers. Last year, the team learned the hard way that Mike Wahle can't hold up inside, and expecting him to play anything other than tackle is a mistake. Without Dotson, Tauscher is forced back to tackle and the only other option is moving backup center Mike Flanagan to guard. The Packers could find plenty of guards in the middle rounds, hopefully an Adam Timmerman type such as Nebraska's Russ Hochstein, Tulane's Bernard Robertson and Wisconsin's Bill Ferrario.

QB: The miraculous durability of Brett Favre continues to be amazing. With Favre rarely missing a snap, the need for a backup is far less critical for Green Bay than it is for other teams. However, the possible loss of Matt Hasselbeck, who could be traded in the days leading up to the draft, leaves the team with just Danny Wuerffel behind Favre. The Packers have a knack for finding solid arms, such as Aaron Brooks, in the middle rounds. Players who fit the bill this year are Western Carolina's David Rivers and Boise State's Bart Hendricks.

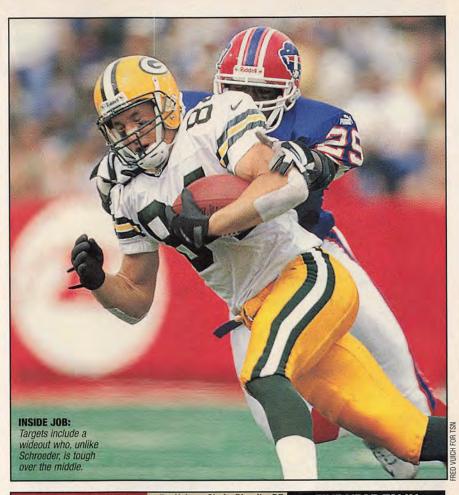
THE OUTLOOK

The illustrious career of executive vice president/general manager Ron Wolf will come to a close in June, and this will mark his final draft with the team he helped rebuild over the past decade.

There isn't much question what Wolf will do with his first-round pick. The Packers are so desperate for help at wide receiver that it would be a huge shock if he went in any other direction. Luckily for Wolf, this year's draft is deep at wide receiver. An extra third-round pick, acquired when the Packers traded Brooks to the Saints last year, could be the type of ammunition Wolf needs to maneuver around and get the player he truly wants in Round 1.

After getting another weapon on the perimeter for Favre, Wolf will look to further upgrade a defense that improved significantly last season. Past drafts have shored up the problems the team had in the secondary, so expect Wolf to focus on the front seven this year.

Green Bay's defensive line is loaded with high-effort veterans such as Thierry and Maryland, but those types will carry a team only so far. Coordinator Ed Donatell did a great job with limited athletes in 2000, but he needs more speed to push this unit over the hump. —The War Room



RECENT HISTORY 2000 DRAFT

1. Bubba Franks, TE
Still on raw side, but team feels
he'll eventually be a playmaker.
2. Chad Clifton, OL

Overcame holdout to become Favre's blindside protector.

3. Steve Warren, DT

Got substantial playing time but suffered rare quadriceps injury.

4a. Na'il Diggs, LB

Won starting job on strong side. Was always around the ball. 4b. Anthony Lucas, WR

Spent entire rookie season on IR with a foot injury.

4c. Gary Berry, DB

Neck injury has put backup safety's career in jeopardy.

5a. Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila, DE Team hopes undersized edge

rusher has an NFL future.

5b. Joey Jamison, WR
Return specialist who couldn't hold on to ball. Was cut.

7a. Mark Tauscher, T Late-round steal could start again at RT next season.

7b. Ron Moore, DTCut before the season. Signed later by Falcons.

7c. Charles Lee, WRPromising athlete will push for No. 3 WR job.

7d. Eugene McCaslin, LB
Probably nothing more than
potential special teams player.
7e. Rondell Mealey, RB
Blew out knee and missed
entire season.

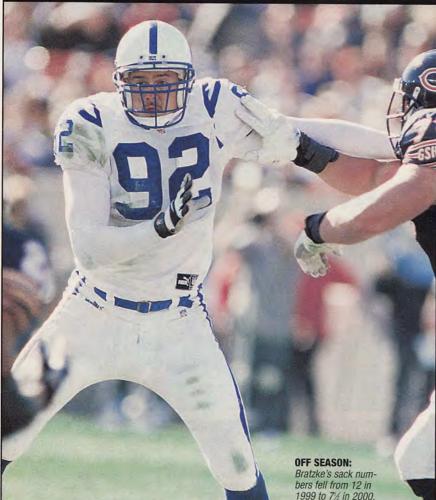
FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The draft is one example of why retiring G.M. Ron Wolf is regarded as one of the best in the business. His departure will cause the team to reshuffle its front office, but the scouting staff will remain strong. Oddly, the team has found most of its impact players in the middle rounds.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	8	8	7	13	13
Starters	2	2	0	1	4
Backups	1	0	4	8	6
Other team	2	3	0	2	1
Out of NFL	3	3	3	2	2

PACKERS WAR ROOM

The Packers, who already are in a rebuilding mode on the field, now have to make major adjustments in the front office, as general manager Ron Wolf has decided to hang it up. He'll be gone as of June 1. Mike Sherman will be both head coach and general manager. This is surprising because Ken Herock, Wolf's longtime friend and the team's vice president of personnel, seemed to be the logical fit to take over this personnel department. But the Packers' brain trust sees qualities in Sherman that it really likes. Making all final personnel decisions while trying to get this team back on track on the field will be a huge challenge. Sherman must delegate to have success. If Herock stays with the organization, he can be a valuable asset to Sherman in both free agency and the draft, and the Packers do have a fairly strong and experienced scouting staff. This is the first time in a long time that the Packers don't have a clear-cut division of responsibilities and a clear leader in the front office, but Sherman is a bright guy and may work well in his dual roles. However, all you have to do is ask the Seahawks' Mike Holmgren or the Vikings' Dennis Green to find out how difficult it is to do both jobs.



PROJ	ECTED [)EPTH	CHART

-	INUJECIED	DPL II	I Uliniti
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Peyton Manning	LE	Brad Scioli
	Kelly Holcomb	1	Bernard Holsey
FB	Jim Finn	LT I	Josh Williams
	Paul Shields		Larry Chester
RB	Edgerrin James	RT I	■ Ellis Johnson
	Lennox Gordon		Bernard Whittingtor
WR	Jerome Pathon	RE I	Chad Bratzke
1	■ Terrence Wilkins		Lionel Barnes
WR	Marvin Harrison	SLB I	Comelius Bennett
	E.G. Green	- 1	Marcus Washingto
TE	Ken Dilger	MLB I	■ Dwight Hollier*
	Marcus Pollard		Ratcliff Thomas
LT	Tarik Glenn	WLB I	Mike Peterson
	Tim Ridder		Phil Glover
LG	Steve McKinney	LC I	Jeff Burris
	Tom Moreira	1	David Macklin
C	■ Jeff Saturday	SS	Chad Cota
	Phillip Armour		Billy Austin
RG	Larry Moore	FS I	Jason Belser*
	Ben Gilbert		Tony Blevins
RT	Adam Meadows	RC I	M. Muhammad
	■ Waverly Jackson		Tyrone Poole
K	Mike Vanderjagt	P	Hunter Smith
	Can play for any	team 🔳	Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

TEAM NEEDS

DT: The most pressing issue on defense is the tackle position. The guys the Colts have on board simply can't hold up against the run. The unit will be thinned even more if Bernard Whittington, an unrestricted free agent, doesn't return. The team spent two 2000 draft choices on Josh Williams (fourth round) and Rob Renes (seventh), but don't be surprised if it uses a first-round choice this year to get one of the top five defensive tackle prospects. With such a deep class of tackles, the Colts could wait until their 52nd overall pick in the second round and get a quality player such as Southern California's Ennis Davis, but if they use a first-round pick on a player such as Georgia's Marcus Stroud, the problem might be solved immediately

DE: This position also is a problem for a team that finished 25th in run defense last season. Chad Bratzke's production plummeted and Bernard Holsey is inconsistent. Adding a starter to replace Holsey, and improving depth are top priorities. But perhaps the best short-term solution would be

to draft a nickel pass rusher. Seven or eight guys in this draft fit the bill, and the Colts could get a player in line with TCU's Aaron Schobel with their second-round pick. S: Some changes are on the horizon here. Safeties Jason Belser and Chad Cota are strong against the run but didn't contribute as much as they once did in coverage. Belser will get strong interest in free agency, and losing him would expose the team's poor depth. But even if Belser stays, the future needs to be a strong consideration. With a lot of players with size and potential in this year's safety class, the Colts would be wise to use a mid-round pick at the position.

CB: Tyrone Poole was demoted late in the season, and David Macklin and Mustafah Muhammad aren't reliable enough yet to count on as viable starters. It wouldn't hurt this group to add a veteran player or a young stud. The problem is that the Colts would rather use their first and second picks on more pressing needs, so they might have to wait until the fourth or fifth round and select a developmental-type guy. Vanderbilt's Jimmy Williams and Akron's Dwight Smith might be two guys the Colts consider.

WR: It looks as though the team finally found a complement to Marvin Harrison. Jerome Pathon played well for the most part but still disappeared in certain games, and his injury history scares the Colts. Slot receiver Terrence Wilkins is an ideal No. 3 receiver because he's a threat underneath when rested. The disappointment here is E.G. Green, who never took advantage of his numerous opportunities. Quarterback Peyton Manning could use one more reliable threat in this group, and the best route might be to take a tall, project-type receiver late in the draft. With a prospect such as Arkansas' Eddie "Boo" Williams or Miami of Ohio's Sly Johnson possibly still around on the second day, the team might consider drafting a receiver.

FB: Offensive coordinator Tom Moore made some adjustments in the scheme last season by incorporating the fullback position more often. Jim Finn did a decent job as a lead blocker for Edgerrin James, but if the team is going to get serious about running more two-back sets, it needs to find a more versatile player. There are a couple of quality players the team could get cheap in the latter rounds who would make a lot of sense. Don't be surprised if a guy such as Washington's Pat Conniff or Nebraska's Willie Miller lands with the team on draft

G: For depth purposes, the Colts need to draft a late-round player at this position. With starters Larry Moore and Steve McKinney and lone reserve Ben Gilbert, the team probably will need to add a bodyeven if only for camp. This year's class is so strong in guards that the Colts could get a

guy such as Oklahoma's Scott Kempenich or Purdue's Chukky Okobi in the last couple of rounds to compete for a backup job.

THE OUTLOOK

The Colts need to add a few playmakers on both sides of the ball. For starters, the defense desperately needs a pass rusher who can step in and increase the sack total. Ideally, the team would use its first two picks on the defensive line in search of a nickel pass-rushing defensive end and a run-stuffing defensive tackle, in no particular order.

Despite depth at wide receiver, the club also might consider drafting a wideout with one of its first three picks. After a group of solid underclassman receivers declared for the draft, some quality players might be left at the position when the Colts draft in the second round.

Finally, Indianapolis could stand to draft a player with an upside at cornerback. With Poole's production tailing off last season, the Colts find themselves in a jam at the position right now, at least in terms of depth.

The Colts always have done a tremendous job of drafting the right player at positions of need, which is why we think defensive tackle, defensive end, receiver and cornerback are the positions that will make up the team's first five picks before it skips to the seventh round (it is without a sixthround pick). - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Rob Morris, LB

Has chance to win starting job after injury-plaqued rookie year. 2. Marcus Washington, LB

Showed flashes but needs to

contribute more as pass rusher.

3. David Macklin, DB

A pleasant surprise. Should at least keep job as nickel back.

4. Josh Williams, DT

Will fight to keep starting job after making eight starts.

5. Matt Johnson, C

Cut in late July. Was not picked up by another team.



7a. Rob Renes, DT Did not play as a rookie but team likes his upside. 7b. Rodregis Brooks, CB Will battle for spot as reserve

CB and special teams player.

Polian has turned this franchise around with great picks in 1997 and '98 and a great decision in '99 to take Edgerrin James, because he was the best fit for the team's offensive philosophy. This shows just how in touch the front office is with the coaches and players.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

Club president Bill

Year .	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	8	8	7	7	7
Starters	1	2	2	2	1
Backups	0	0	2	2	5
Other team	2	2	1	2	0
Out of NFL	5	4	2	1	1

COLTS WAR ROOM

The Colts' front office remains one of the strongest and most organized in the NFL, even though the team is coming off a disappointing season. President Bill Polian runs this organization with a strong hand, and he has earned his reputation as one of the top executives in league history by turning around the Bills, Panthers and Colts, Polian leans heavily on director of football operations Dom Anile, his longtime associate. Final decisions usually are made by the trio of Polian, Anile and coach Jim Mora, but this is an organization that is always publicly on the same page. Anile pushes his scouts hard to not only know the college ranks and the draft but also to know the players on the team's own roster, including strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the Colts might do better addressing their needs than any other team. Though the scouts only have moderate input in the draft, their voices are heard, and morale is solid. The Colts have done a tremendous job with their top picks. Young stars such as QB Peyton Manning, RB Edgerrin James and MLB Rob Morris are the future of this franchise. Polian & Co. know exactly how to blend young talent with key veteran acquisitions to build a roster, putting a premium on athleticism and team speed.

TEAM NEEDS

G: Brenden Stai never played as well as the team expected him to last season, and it's unlikely that Jacksonville will opt to re-sign him. If Zach Wiegert isn't able to bounce back from last season's knee injury, the team might be forced to use free agency to find a guy who can come in and play right away. The team would never waste a first-round pick on a guard, especially this year, when the draft class has a lot of quality depth at the position. So expect Jacksonville to use one of its midround picks on a player such as Purdue's Matt Light. DE: The Jaguars need to bring in a pass-

rushing specialist to play opposite Tony Brackens on obvious passing downs. Renaldo Wynn does a decent job against the run, but he doesn't take the double teams away from Brackens in nickel situations. With so much talent in the draft in the form of undersized pass rushers, the Jaguars ought to be able to get their hands on a guy like Florida State's Roland Seymour in the third round.

WR: The Jaguars have one of the top tandems in the league-Jimmy Smith and

Keenan McCardell-but last year's first-round pick, R. Jay Soward, rarely contributed. In fact, Soward wound up being a huge off-field and locker-room problem. Alvis Whitted is nothing more than a special teams guy. The Jags may not draft another receiver but could acquire a veteran via free agency to take over the No. 3 job until Soward grows up.

LB: Kevin Hardy should be in his prime, but aging Hardy Nickerson missed 10 games because of injuries last season, and there is an excellent chance that Lonnie Marts will not be back. The unit got some great emergency help from T.J. Slaughter and Erik Storz, but Storz is nothing more than a special teams player, and the verdict is still out on Slaughter. The team would be wise to use a middle-round pick to draft a versatile linebacker who can help. A couple of prospects who fit the bill are Florida State's Brian Allen and Syracuse's Morlon Greenwood.

RB: The team sure missed James Stewart last season. Anthony Johnson is an unrestricted free agent, and Fred Taylor can't go another season without a reliable backup. As for Shyrone Stith, the Jaguars like what they see

DROIFCTED DEPTH CHART

	OFFENSE	/LI III	DEFENSE
QB	Mark Brunell	LE	Renaldo Wynn
QD.	Jamie Martin		Rob Meier
FB	Daimon Shelton*	LT I	Gary Walker
	Jermaine Williams		Emarlos Leroy
RB	Fred Taylor	RT I	Seth Payne
	Anthony Johnson*		Larry Smith
WR	Jimmy Smith	RE I	Tony Brackens
	Alvis Whitted		Paul Spicer
WR	Keenan McCardell	SLB I	Kevin Hardy
	R. Jay Soward		Danny Clark
TE	Kyle Brady	MLB I	Hardy Nickerson
	Damon Jones	-	T.J. Slaughter
LT	Tony Boselli	WLB I	Lonnie Marts
	Reggie Nelson		Brant Boyer
LG	■ Brad Meester	LC I	Fernando Bryan
	Jeff Smith*	1	Jason Craft
C	John Wade	SS I	Donovin Darius
	Jeff Smith*		■ Mike Logan*
RG	Zach Wiegert	FS I	Carnell Lake
	Brendan Stai		None
RT	Leon Searcy	RC I	Aaron Beasley
	Zach Wiegert		Jason Craft
K	Mike Hollis	P	■ Bryan Barker*

in the youngster on kickoff returns and as a third-down back, but he's not an every-down option as a backup. It's too bad Tavian Banks is no longer around. The Jaguars might have to ante up and use a fourth-round pick on a back like UNLV's Kevin Brown.

CB: Depth is the primary concern here. When healthy, Fernando Bryant and Aaron Beasley form a strong tandem, and Jason Craft showed he's capable of handling the nickel duties. But beyond that, the Jaguars are a bit short in talent. Kiwaukee Thomas has shown some flashes, and Shad Criss played well for an undrafted free agent, but the Jags would be wise to add some young talent in the offseason. There are enough quality guys with good size/speed combinations that the Jaguars could wait until the fifth round to add a player with the potential of Southern Mississippi's Leo Barnes.

FS: This position could be saved by a healthy return of Carnell Lake, but if he's not 100 percent or if he doesn't return at all, the Jaguars will need to act. Rayna Stewart played most of the 2000 season in Lake's absence. but the only thing he proved is that he is incapable of playing on a full-time basis. Erik Olson is the only other backup, and he's not ready to be a starter in this league, either. The problem, however, is that unless the Jaguars want to use their first-round pick and bypass all these other needs to draft a player like Florida State's Derrick Gibson, they will not find a guy in this draft who is ready to start right away.

THE OUTLOOK

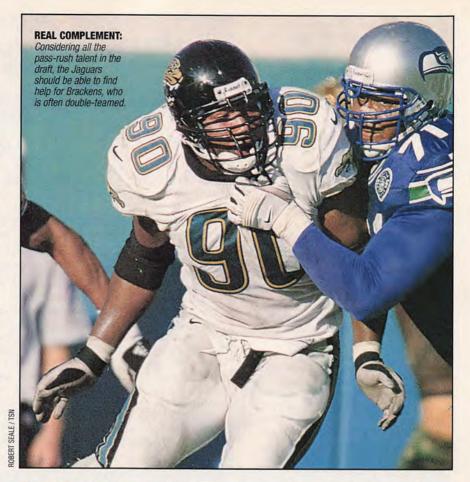
The team faced a busy offseason, with \$32 million to shave off its salary cap. The resulting decisions and developments in free agency will have much to do with dictating the team's draft moves.

As of late February, Jacksonville had two third-round picks and two fourth-round picks, which is encouraging because the team clearly is going to have to dump many of its veteran players for some guys it can pay the league minimum. But not having a secondround pick will really hurt.

Besides the possible mistake of drafting Soward with its first pick last year, Jacksonville has been phenomenal at landing first-round talent. Tony Boselli, Bryant, Taylor and Hardy have all made a major impact. The Jaguars likely will go after an impact player for the defensive line in the first round. They still have some quality players at tackle but need to gear up for the future at both positions.

The Jags also must address their guard position. Expect the team to draft a player with the potential to play right away with one of its four picks in the third and fourth

Finally, it wouldn't hurt for Jacksonville to use another one of those mid-round picks on a receiver. If the team can't hold on to McCardell because of cap reasons and Soward doesn't pan out, this group could go from the one of the league's best to one of the worst in a matter of months. - The War Room



RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. R. Jay Soward, WR Coaches' headache needs to clean up act before he gets cut. 2. Brad Meester, C/G Won starting job at left guard.

Probably won't give it back. 3. T.J. Slaughter, LB

Will return to backup role but could be team's MLB of future. 4. Joey Chustz, G

Failed to take advantage of opportunities. Could get cut. 5. Kiwaukee Thomas, CB

If things fall right for him, he could be nickel CB in 2001.

6. Emanuel Smith, WR Didn't contribute much. Will

compete for No. 4 WR spot. 7a. Erik Olson, CB Will challenge for a spot in

dime defense 7b. Rob Meier, DL

Played in every game. Established role as backup LE. 7c. Shyrone Stith, RB

Will continue as kick returner and reserve RB 7d. Danny Clark, LB

Showed lot of promise. Will compete for backup OLB job. 7e. Mark Baniewicz, T

Projected to be Boselli's backup at left tackle.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The team has made one or two picks in each draft that have been exceptional in terms of how well that player fits into the system. A lot of credit has to go to coach Tom Coughlin for recognizing those players. One of Coughlin's best moves was a trade for the pick that yielded RB Fred Taylor.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	10	7	11	8	11
Starters	3	3	2	2	2
Backups	0	2	3	2	7
Other team	1	0	3	2	0
Out of NFL	6	2	3	2	2

JAGUARS WAR ROOM

The Jaguars have had a great run with one of the best rosters in the NFL, but they have huge salarycap problems and may have to dismantle the team before the 2001 season. The Jags have a strong front office, but their skills will be severely tested. Coach Tom Coughlin runs this organization from top to bottom but is part of a trio of decision-makers who share in personnel decisions. The other two are Michael Huyghue, senior vice president of football operations, and Rick Reiprish, who runs the personnel department. Both have a lot of experience and know exactly what Coughlin wants on and off the field. For the most part, the Jags have done a great job in free agency and the draft, but one gets the impression their window of opportunity may be closing because of salary-cap restraints and questionable moves in free agency. The decisions to overpay aging veterans such as Bryce Paup, Carnell Lake and Hardy Nickerson in the hope they could get the team to a Super Bowl may haunt the Jags. Everything in the NFL is cyclical, and it is very tough to stay on top for an extended length of time. The Jags are finding out that life at the top is hard to maintain.

HANSAS CITY CHIEFS

TEAM NEEDS

G: The expected retirement of Dave Szott and possible free-agent defection of Will Shields could leave the team extremely vulnerable between the tackles. Jeff Blackshear is a capable starter and the team is grooming young Darnell Alford at the position, but he's more of a natural right tackle. The team doesn't have any runners who can avoid quick-filling defenders, so it must either address the interior of the line by re-signing Shields or through the draft. There is a solid group of guards at the top of the draft, led by Michigan's Steve Hutchinson, but the Chiefs could opt to wait until the third or fourth round, when they could tab an intriguing player such as Mississippi State's Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack.

DT: Chester McGlockton's lively late-season play gave this unit some hope, now the Chiefs merely hope they can find somebody to replace the 10-year NFL veteran after releasing him in a salary-cap move. Instead, Dan Williams, Steve Martin and perhaps John Browning are the best options among the current Chiefs to fill McGlockton's shoes. Unless one of the young players improves dramatically before the start of camp, this unit needs an influx of talent. New defensive coordinator Greg Robinson likes to be aggressive up front, which makes depth even more of a concern. If the Chiefs decide to go this route in the first round, which remains a distinct possibility, the choices include Georgia's Marcus Stroud and Texas' Shaun Rogers.

QB: When Elvis Grbac, who was coming off an extremely productive season, and the team couldn't agree on a reworked contract, the Chiefs decided to release their starting quarterback. Now, with the retirement of Warren Moon, Todd Collins has inherited the starting job, but the team is expected to pursue a free-agent quarterback. Whether or not the team can find a first-string QB, coach Dick Vermeil should consider drafting an exciting passer such as Georgia's Quincy Carter or Rutger's Mike McMahon in the middle rounds of the draft.

CB: The staff feels strongly about the upside of both Pat Dennis and William Bartee, who got plenty of experience as rookies. Their confidence was so high that new regime released steady but aging cornerback James Hasty. Dennis was picked on most of the season, but he can be a good one if he recaptures his confidence. Eric Warfield, who is entering a pivotal fourth season, took a step backward last year and might be poached by another club in free agency. Although Robinson is a firm believer in strong bump-and-run coverage, it's doubtful the Chiefs will spend anything higher than a fifth-round pick on another cornerback, so look for them to explore the free-agency route or waiver wire.

RB: It took them until Week 15, but the Chiefs finally gave Tony Richardson his shot at halfback. The bruising fullback ran well out of one-back sets and is a solid short-vardage back, but G.M. Carl Peterson must now decide if he's the long-term every-down answer. If Peterson decides he's not, Richardson will return to his fullback chores. Either way. the team must find either a workhorse ballcarrier or a lead blocker for Richardson. Past failures such as Rashaan Shehee and Mike Cloud are coming back to haunt the Chiefs. Although we have it listed as the team's fourth need, there's a chance that Peterson will give in to his temptations and take a running back in the first round. If that's the case, the Chiefs could land a potential impact player such as Ole Miss product Deuce McAllister or Wisconsin speedster Michael Rennett

WR: Aside from one huge game early in the season, rookie Sylvester Morris wasn't very productive. He's athletic enough to demand respect from opposing defenses, but Morris must work on becoming a more polished, allaround receiver. Big-play

receiver Derrick Alexander restructured his contract in February to ensure a few more seasons with the team. The Chiefs again failed to use Kevin Lockett last season. Although he had been the team's best receiver the past three years in training camp, Lockett was a spectator once the regular season began. Look for Lockett to move on in free agency, which will make acquiring a veteran slot receiver a priority. Offensive coordinator Al Saunders intends to run the same wide-open passing attack he helped install in St. Louis, so it won't surprise us if the Chiefs ignore other pressing needs and take a wide receiver on the draft's first day. If that's the case, some interesting players who might fall to them in the third round are Nebraska's Bobby Newcombe or Auburn's Ronney Daniels.

THE OUTLOOK

The reunion of Peterson and Vermeil, who last worked together with the Eagles two decades ago, should be a harmonious one on draft day. They share great respect for each other and view the team from the



	PROJECTED I	JEYIN	LHAKI
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Todd Collins	LE I	Eric Hicks
	None		John Browning
FB	■ Tony Richardson	LT	Steve Martin
	None		None
HB	Frank Moreau	RT I	Dan Williams
	Mike Cloud		None
WR	Derrick Alexander	RE I	Duane Clemons
	Larry Parker		John Browning
WR	Sylvester Morris	SLB I	Mike Maslowski
	■ Kevin Lockett*		Lew Bush
TE	Tony Gonzalez	MLB	Marvous Patton
	■ Troy Drayton*		Ron George
LT	John Tait	WLB	Donnie Edwards
	Marcus Spears		Ron George
LG	Jeff Blackshear	LC	Pat Dennis
	Darnell Alford		Eric Warfield
C	Tim Grunhard*	SS	Greg Wesley
	Donald Willis		Larry Atkins
RG	■ Will Shields*	FS I	Jerome Woods
	Damell Alford		Bracey Walker
RT	■ Victor Riley	RC	William Bartee
	Willie Jones	1	Eric Warfield
K	Todd Peterson	P	Todd Sauerbrun

same philosophical perspective.

Though much will be expected of Vermeil in his return to football, he has more talent to work with in Kansas City than he did in his first season in St. Louis. For a team that never seriously contended for the playoffs a year ago, the Chiefs don't have many glaring holes on either side of the ball.

Offensively, they are set at key positions such as quarterback (Grbac), left tackle (John Tait), tight end (Gonzalez) and wide receiver (Alexander and Morris). The one position that must be addressed is running back. Although Richardson provided a spark at the end of last season, the Chiefs will strongly consider using the No. 12 pick on a young player with more big-play ability than the aging fullback.

On defense, the Chiefs feel confident about the talent they've assembled in the secondary, so look for them to focus mostly on the front seven. Outside linebacker Donnie Edwards is the only legitimate impact player in the group, and he can't be counted on to rush the passer and make plays in coverage at the same time. Peterson has invested big money in his defensive line and in return has received only inconsistent play and consistent injuries. The team's defensive line is quickly becoming one of the oldest in the league, and this draft is a perfect opportunity for the Chiefs to infuse some youth. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Sylvester Morris, WR Beyond one 3-touchdown game, he did little opposite Alexander.

2. William Bartee, DB

Played extensively in nickel and dime packages.

3. Greg Wesley, DB

Rookie surprise took over for departed FA Reggie Tongue.

4. Frank Moreau, RB

Plagued by fumbling problems, but good short-yardage option.

5a. Dante Hall, RB

Kick-return specialist. Doesn't fit in team's backfield plans



5b. Pat Dennis, DB Earned starting job. Got picked

on a lot but should improve.

6. Darnell Alford, OL

Being groomed to take over one of the guard positions.

7. Desmond Kitchings, WR Jets signed him off team's practice squad late in year.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

G.M. Carl Peterson's draft aim has been inconsistent over the past five years. He has struck out with running backs but has done a nice job with the rest of the offense, particularly with TE Tony Gonzalez and LT John Tait. Defensively, LB Donnie Edwards has been the only impact choice.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	9	6	7	6	8
Starters	3	1	1	1	3
Backups	0	1	2	4	4
Other team	4	2	1	0	1
Out of NFL	2	2	3	1	0

CHIEFS WAR ROOM

Big changes are in store with the departures of coach Gunther Cunningham and personnel director Terry Bradway and arrival of new coach Dick Vermeil. The Chiefs probably will not replace Bradway. But longtime Vermeil friend Lynn Stiles, who was vice president of football operations a year ago, will be heavily involved in personnel decisions, and Vermeil also will seek advice from Mike White. The three of them, along with Carl Peterson, have a long history together. Bill Kuharich remains in charge of pro personnel and has an excellent background. He'll have a major role in the transition of the new staff as well as in personnel decisions. The Chiefs have a veteran scouting staff, led by Chuck Cook, and it will be interesting to see what their role is with the new coaching staff. Vermeil always has been a coach who treats everyone with class and respect. He has the ability to keep morale high, so the rapport between the front office and coaching staff likely will be very strong. Peterson is the type of administrator who may not attend every workout, but he watches a lot of film and he knows what he wants. This is a group that will provide the right information and should do an excellent job of analyzing and assessing it.



TEAM NEEDS

LT: The team must get serious about adding depth at the position. The Dolphins have placed the franchise tag on Richmond Webb the past two seasons to keep him, but they used it this year on Jason Taylor. If Webb leaves, Brent Smith is next in line to start, but he's not the quality player the Dolphins need on the left side. Miami might try to get by with Smith for one year, but adding someone like Florida's Kenyatta Walker or Michigan's Jeff Backus would be the long-term solution. LB: There is a clear need for depth across the board. The team has three solid starters in Robert Jones, Zach Thomas and Derrick Rodgers, but they rarely get a break. Thomas and Rodgers in particular hardly come off the field. Scott Galyon missed most of last year on injured reserve, and Larry Izzo was in over his head when forced into the starting lineup. The Dolphins cannot afford to start the season without at least one more solid reserve. By using even a fourth-round pick, the Dolphins could get a player like Oregon's

Matt Smith.

WR: There are some real tough decisions to make concerning the future of this unit. Leslie Shepherd, Bert Emanuel and Lamar Thomas all were free agents, and the team unloaded Tony Martin for salary-cap reasons. Moreover, this unit could use an infusion of youth. Oronde Gadsden might be the only receiver worth keeping. Miami could use a secondround pick to draft Ohio State's Ken-Yon Rambo or Clemson's Rod Gardner, either of whom could help immediately.

RB: The injury to Thurman Thomas, who who is expected to retire, revealed last year how badly this offense needs someone to fill the third-down role. The Dolphins would be wise to jettison J.J. Johnson, hold on to Autry Denson and draft an athletic, young back to help on passing downs. Even a third-round pick could get a Travis Minor from Florida State or David Allen from Kansas State.

G: Kevin Donnalley became an unrestricted free agent, and Heath Irwin never showed last year that he was capable of holding down a starting job on the line-and he was given

OB	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Jay Fiedler	LE I	Jason Taylor
	Damon Huard	-	Lorenzo Bromell
FB	Rob Konrad	LT I	Daryl Gardener
-	Deon Dyer	-	Emest Grant
RB	■ Lamar Smith	RT I	Tim Bowens
	J.J. Johnson	I CONTRACTOR	Jermaine Haley
WR	O.J. McDuffie	RE I	Kenny Mixon
	None		Rich Owens*
WR	Oronde Gadsden	SLB I	Robert Jones
	Leslie Shepherd*	bolome	Twan Russell*
TE	Hunter Goodwin	MLB I	Zach Thomas
	Jed Weaver		Larry Izzo*
LT	■ Richmond Webb*	WLB	Derrick Rodgers
	■ Brent Smith		Tommy Hendrick
LG	Mark Dixon	LC I	Patrick Surtain
	Heath Irwin		Terrence Shaw*
C	■ Tim Ruddy	SS I	Brian Walker
	Heath Irwin		Arturo Freeman
RG	■ Kevin Donnalley*	FS I	Brock Marion*
	Anthony Cesario		Greg Jeffries
RT	■ Todd Wade	RC	Sam Madison
	■ Brent Smith		Jerry Wilson*
K	Olindo Mare*	P	Matt Turk

more than enough time to prove himself. Even if Donnalley returns, the team needs to build for the future. With such a strong draft class of guards, this year would be an ideal time to draft one in the third or fourth round, where the team could find quality players like Boston College's Paul Zukauskas or Notre Dame's Mike Gandy.

TE: It's not for a lack of trying, but the team doesn't have a complete player at this position. At the very least, it must add a capable receiver. Starter Hunter Goodwin is one of the better blocking tight ends, but he contributes little in the passing game. Jed Weaver showed flashes after being picked up in late August, and the team was weighing whether Alonzo Mayes was worth bringing back. With all three, there is no reason to draft a tight end, but the Dolphins could be in a position to unload two of the three by drafting a guy like UTEP's Brian Natkin with a mid-round pick. Natkin led the school in career catches with 172

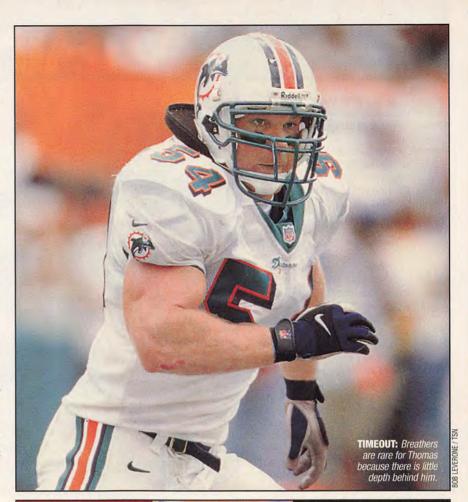
DE: It's time to build for the future here. Jason Taylor was given the franchise tag, so he will return. But two other ends, Rich Owens and Trace Armstrong, also are free agents, and only one is likely to return. So the Dolphins might want to add a young player to develop. Unless Miami uses one of its top three picks on a solid player, though, it might not be worth the investment. But even in the third round, the Dolphins could get a guy like Nebraska's Kyle Vanden Bosch to help against the run

THE OUTLOOK

The front office probably would admit that it didn't think the team would be as far along as it is right now. A trip to the playoffs without Johnson emerging as the starting back and with quarterback Jay Fiedler leading the troops was a shock, and Miami is in good shape to build on last year's success.

The first order of business is to square away the left tackle position. The team probably will use its top pick, No. 26 overall, to draft the best player available in the offensive tackle class, but particularly someone who fits the left side. After that, the team has the luxury of drafting the best athlete available with its next six picks. It obviously would like to add some youth to an aging receiving corps and another middle linebacker to give Thomas a breather, but don't be surprised if director of personnel Rick Spielman and coach Dave Wannstedt agree to take some top athletes at other positions to make the team better.

The only thing that could shake up the Dolphins' draft is if they were to use an early pick on a quarterback. Outside of Michael Vick and Drew Brees, who both probably will be gone by the time Miami picks in the first round, there are no quarterbacks ready to start as rookies. Two players the team possibly could take are Florida State's Chris Weinke or Oklahoma's Josh Heupel. If one is drafted, the Dolphins would hope to have him ready to contribute in 2002. -The War Room



2000 DRAFT

2. Todd Wade, OT

Won starting job quickly and is entrenched at right tackle.

3. Ben Kelly, CB

Needs to be more productive, both as a CB and return man.

4. Deon Dyer, FB

Solid blocker. Will continue to be Rob Konrad's backup.

5. Arturo Freeman, DB

Will again back up Brian Walker at strong safety.

6. Ernest Grant, DT

Should play a bigger role in team's DT rotation in 2001.



7. Jeff Harris, CB

In a battle to keep a roster spot as a reserve cornerback.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Jimmy Johnson era produced some valuable talent with mid- and lateround picks, including LBs Zach Thomas and Derrick Rodgers, but the search for a quality running back cost the team a lot of picks. However, if last year's draft was a sign of things to come, the club will be in good shape.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	12	14	10	8	6
Starters	2	3	2	1	1
Backups	0	2	1	2	5
Other team	4	2	3	3	0
Out of NFL	6	7	4	2	0

DOLPHINS WAR ROOM

The Dolphins kept most of the front office intact after Jimmy Johnson's retirement a year ago and the departure of Johnson's right-hand man, Bob Ackles. But the structure has changed. Rick Spielman is now the personnel director, and he, along with coach Dave Wannstedt, will make most of the final personnel decisions. Leading the pro personnel department is Tom Heckert Jr., who is likely to have solid input into free-agent decisions. This is a veteran group, especially on the scouting side, and Wannstedt-much like Johnson-is a coach who welcomes input from all of his scouts and includes everybody in the decisionmaking process, which creates high morale. This is not a group of big egos but is rather very much a bluecollar outfit that works hard to get the job done. Wannstedt is probably a little more conservative throughout the draft process than Johnson, who liked to gamble. But Wannstedt still will emphasize speed and athleticism, which keeps the Dolphins as one of the better matchup teams in the NFL. Wannstedt knows personnel. Even though his drafts at Chicago were considered failures, the prevailing feeling is that he and Spielman will do a solid job of keeping the Dolphins in the league's top echelon in terms of personnel.

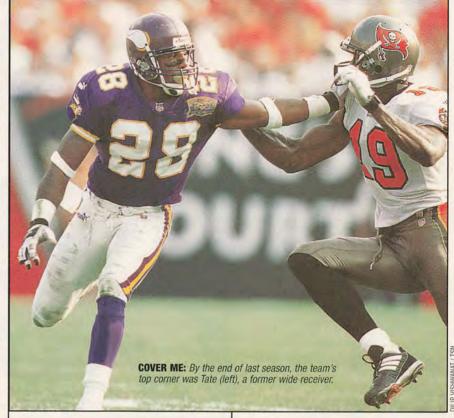
MINESOTA VIHINGS

TEAM NEEDS

RB: No one saw it coming, not even coach Dennis Green. The unexpected and untimely retirement of Robert Smith, who led the NFC with 1,521 rushing yards last season, leaves the Vikings with a huge hole to fill in the backfield. Veteran Moe Williams is a straight-line power runner who is best suited for short-yardage situations. Doug Chapman, a third-round pick a year ago, doesn't have the confidence of the coaching staff. Because neither player is a suitable replacement for Smith, the Vikings likely will try to pick up a replacement via a trade or waiver pickup. If they can't land someone such as Ricky Watters or Dorsey Levens, look for the Vikings to spend one of their top two picks on a running back. A couple of all-purpose players who would fit nicely into Green's system are Pittsburgh's Kevan Barlow and Michigan's Anthony Thomas.

CB: The most promising player in the group, Kenny Wright, still has a ways to go. The Vikings tried veteran Cris Dishman for a stretch last season, but he was a waste of time. Robert Tate, a converted wide receiver, finished last season as the team's top cover man, but he fits better in a reserve role. The staff won't give up on young guys such as Keith Thibodeaux, but don't be surprised if Green focuses the early part of his draft solely on this position. The group from which he will be picking in the latter stage of the first round includes Mississippi's Ken Lucas and Ohio State's Nate Clements. Baylor's Gary Baxter is another possibility,

	PROJECTED D)EPTH	CHART
	OFFENSE	1	DEFENSE
QB	■ Daunte Culpepper	LE I	Talance Sawyer
	Bubby Brister*		None
FB	Jim Kleinsasser	LT I	Tony Williams*
	Harold Morrow		Fernando Smith*
RB	Moe Williams	RT I	Chris Hovan
	Doug Chapman		John Burrough
WR	Cris Carter	RE	John Burrough
	Chris Walsh*		Michael Boireau
WR	Randy Moss	LOLB	■ Dwayne Rudd*
	Matthew Hatchette*		Lemanski Hall
TE	Johnny McWilliams*	MLB	Kailee Wong
	John Davis*		Craig Sauer
LT	■ Todd Steussie	ROLB	■ Ed McDaniel
	Brad Badger		Jim Nelson
LG	■ Corbin Lacina*	LC	Wasswa Serwanga
	Chris Liwienski		Kenny Wright
C	Matt Birk	SS I	Robert Griffith
	Cory Withrow		Antonio Banks
RG	■ David Dixon	FS I	Orlando Thomas
	Chris Liwienski		Tyrone Carter
RT	Korey Stringer	RC	Robert Tate
	Brad Badger		Keith Thibodeaux
K	Gary Anderson	P	Mitch Berger



though some teams rate him as a safety. DL: Lack of talent up front caused the team to scramble all of last season. Whether they were moving John Randle in or out and left or right, or making roster moves as late as Week 16, the Vikings never were comfortable with the people they had up front. After the season, Randle asked to be traded, but instead the team released the him to help cut salary. Chris Hovan proved to be a solid addition from last year's draft, but the same can't be said for seldom-used Fred Robbins, who needs to impress at training camp. The team can't expect its marginal talent in the secondary to hold up with a nonexistent pass rush, so look for Green to target an interior player who can collapse the pocket. One prospect who might be available on the draft's second day is Southern California's Ennis Davis.

WR: Cris Carter is still a Pro Bowl-caliber player, and Randy Moss is the best in the business, but the lack of a quality third receiver put limitations on the offense last season. Matthew Hatchette never lived up to expectations. Chris Walsh makes plays whenever he's called upon but has limited physical ability. There's hope Troy Walters can step up next season and develop into a threat in the slot. It would be smart to get another solid young player in the draft while Carter is still around. This year's receivers crop is extremely talented and fair-

ly deep, so it's possible the Vikings could get Purdue's Vinny Sutherland as late as the fourth round.

OLB: With Dwayne Rudd's contract up for renewal, the Vikings either have to shell out top dollar or have an alternative plan in place. Rudd is one of the league's top playmakers at his position, but he will be tough to retain. The Vikings could move Kailee Wong back outside and plug Jim Nelson in the middle and remain competitive. This will be one of Green's toughest decisions. This isn't a pressing need, but the Vikings intend to spend at least a pick or two here in the later rounds. Two sleepers who might interest them are Illinois' Mike Young and Notre Dame's Anthony Denman.

QB: Last season, Daunte Culpepper emerged as one of the most productive passers in the league, but there is a pressing need for an experienced backup. Bubby Brister's arm is shot, and he didn't give the team a chance to win when he was forced into the lineup. Todd Bouman, who has been around since 1997, probably will get a look as the No. 2 quarterback. The Vikings likely will spend their seventh-round pick on a prospect or wait until after the draft and sign a couple of rookie free agents.

THE OUTLOOK

It's amazing what one loss can mean to a

team, and we're not talking about the Vikings' embarrassing 41-0 loss to the Giants in the NFC championship game. While that loss still stings, a more crushing blow came when Smith, the team's Pro Bowl running back, called it quits in the prime of his career.

Green, who also has final say in personnel matters, was planning to attack the draft with a defensive mind-set, but Smith's retirement could change those intentions dramatically. Because they would be rolling the dice on a rookie, even one selected in the first round, expect the Vikings to seek an established veteran runner via free agency or trade.

Although the possibility still exists that Green could find Smith's replacement in the draft, it would make more sense to restock a defense in desperate need of playmakers. Aside from Hovan, the top pick, last year's draft brought little relief, and the same holes must be filled for the Vikings to compete against the league's more balanced

If the Vikings clear enough cap room to retain the services of Rudd, look for them to target primarily the defensive line and secondary. Although it would be ideal to find an eventual replacement for Carter or a passcatching tight end, Green simply doesn't have the luxury of addressing the team's less-glaring needs on offense. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Chris Hovan, DT Big-time contributor who played well alongside mentor Randle.



2a. Fred Robbins, DT Looked like reach on draft day and did little to dispel that view. 2b. Michael Boireau, DE

Spent season on IR, but staff is counting on him to rebound.

3. Doug Chapman, RB With Robert Smith retiring, he'll get an opportunity to step up.

4a. Antonio Wilson, LB Played one game, on special

teams. Inactive rest of season. 4b. Tyrone Carter, DB Filled in at FS when O. Thomas was hurt but wasn't ready.

5. Troy Walters, WR Team's top return man also can contribute as fourth receiver.

7a. Mike Malano, C Suffered leg injury in camp.

Staff thinks he can play. 7b. Giles Cole, TE

Cut last August but likely will be re-signed this year. 7c. Lewis Kelly, G

Went on IR during camp with a knee injury.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Vikings made brilliant first-round picks in recent years in WR Randy Moss and QB Daunte Culpepper. But outside of those two, the team has had little success with its top picks. Most of the talent was found in the later rounds. Last year's dismal draft hurt this overall grade.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	6	8	8	9	10
Starters	0	3	3	3	1
Backups	1	2	0	2	9
Other team	2	2	3	3	0
Out of NFL	3	1	2	1	0

VIKINGS WAR ROOM

The Vikings are suffering through a bitter offseason for the second year in a row after being embarrassed by the Giants in the NFC championship game. Dennis Green still is handling the dual roles of head coach and general manager. He still is actively involved in all personnel decisions and has the final say in both free agency and the draft. Green has a lot of confidence and is not afraid to attack the draft. But changes are in store. There has been some shuffling in his personnel department. Richard Solomon, Green's long-time assistant coach and trusted aide, will assume a much stronger role in the personnel department, especially in pro personnel. He will be a liaison to Green in all personnel areas. Vice president of player personnel Frank Gilliam runs the draft and is well-respected. The scouting staff has been together a long time. It is both thorough and organized. Green seems to have an uncanny feel for the pulse of his team. Just when it seems the Vikings are in big trouble, he fills the holes to keep the team on a competitive level, With Robert Smith's retirement and tremendous needs on defense, Green has his work cut out for him this year. He must hit on almost every personnel acquisition, but don't bet against him.



TEAM NEEDS

DT: New England finished ranked in the bottom third of the league in run defense (21st) and sacks (25th), which explains most of its defensive problems last season. Out of place in the defense's twogap scheme, Henry Thomas looked like a player in his 14th season. Backup defensive linemen Garrett Johnson and Reggie Grimes were non-factors. Chad Eaton, an unrestricted free agent, was the only consistent contributor on the line. If the team can't re-sign Eaton or lure a quality runstuffer, then expect the Patriots to draft a defensive tackle with one of their top picks. With such a deep and talented group of tackles available in this year's class, the Patriots probably can wait until the second round and still find a quality player, such as Casey Hampton of Texas, Kenny Smith of Alabama or Derrick Chambers of Florida.

WR: The Patriots have two solid receivers in Terry Glenn and Troy Brown, but the unit as a whole is vastly undersized and gets pushed around too much by physical cornerbacks. Tony Simmons is in coach Bill Belichick's doghouse and might be released. That would leave relatively unknown commodities Curtis Jackson and Shockmain Davis, and the team can't afford to give so few options to Drew Bledsoe. Ideally, the Patriots would use their top pick on an offensive tackle, use free agency to find a defensive tackle and use their second pick on a physical receiver such as Rod Gardner of Clemson or Chris Chambers of Wisconsin. OT: Adrian Klemm and Greg Robinson-Randall were drafted last year. Klemm, a second-round pick, missed most of the season with a knee injury. Robinson-Randall, a fourth-round pick, still needs time to develop. A few years removed from his dominant days at left tackle, Bruce Armstrong, who should have retired, probably has played his last game for the Patriots. The best thing New England could do is use its first-round

	PROJECTED D		
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	■ Drew Bledsoe	DL	Brandon Mitchell*
	Michael Bishop		Reggie Grimes
FB	■ Tony Carter*	NT	■ Chad Eaton*
	Larry Bowie		Henry Thomas
RB	J.R. Redmond	DL	■ Bobby Hamilton*
	Kevin Faulk		David Nugent
WR	Troy Brown	OLB	Willie McGinest
	Curtis Jackson		Greg Spires
WR	Terry Glenn	ILB	Tedy Bruschi
	Shockmain Davis		Rob Holmberg
TE	Rod Rutledge	ILB	■ Ted Johnson
	Jermaine Wiggins		None
LT	Bruce Armstrong*	OLB	A. Katzenmeyer
	Grant Williams		Antico Dalton
LG	Joe Andruzzi	LC	Ty Law
	Adrian Klemm		Otis Smith
C	Damien Woody	SS	Lawyer Milloy
	Joe Andruzzi		Tony George
RG	Sale Isaia*	FS	Tebucky Jones
	Max Lane		Larry Whigham
RT	G. Robinson-Randall	RC	Otis Smith
	Max Lane		Antonio Langham
K	Adam Vinatieri	P	Lee Johnson

pick (sixth overall) to draft Texas' Leonard Davis, the nation's top offensive lineman. By drafting a stud to solidify the left side of their line, the Patriots could ensure protection on Bledsoe's blind side. then move Klemm to right tackle and try Robinson-Randall at guard.



G: Veteran Max Lane is coming off an injury-filled season, and neither Sale Isaia nor Grev Ruegamer is the answer. In fact, the only consistent performer along the entire line last season was C Damien Woody, the team's first-round pick in 1999. Of the seven teams that allowed

> more sacks than the Patriots (48), only the Panthers managed to keep their No. 1 quarterback healthy enough to start all 16 games, as the Patriots did. It's no way for a team to treat its money player, so the Patriots need to do more to protect Bledsoe. Belichick continues to demand versatility from his players, which means there may be a move to guard in the future for Klemm and/or Robinson-Randall. But in a draft rich with talented guards, the Patriots can probably find good value if Boston College's Paul Zukauskas slips to the middle rounds, or they can wait to grab Illinois' Ray Redziniak with a lateround pick.

CB: Tv Law is entrenched on one side,

and Kato Serwanga gives the team good depth. But neither Otis Smith, who started most of the season, nor Antonio Langham, who saw significant action, got the job done, and it cost the team. Langham, who turns 29 in July, and Smith, who turns 36 in October, are starting to show their age. The Patriots need to add some young legs to their secondary, but they probably won't draft a cornerback until the third round, at the earliest. The best options at that point could be Utah's Andre Dyson or Georgia's Jamie Henderson.

DE: Willie McGinest was a disappointment last season. Bobby Hamilton, the starter on the opposite side, and backup Greg Spires were consistent contributors. Hamilton, who arrived from the Jets as a free agent, is one of Belichick's favorite players. Spires will remain a situational pass rusher. If McGinest can't play within Belichick's scheme, the Patriots will need to find a player who can. So it wouldn't hurt to use one of their late-round picks on an undersized pass-rushing end with speed, such as Florida State's David Warren or Arizona's Joe Tafoya.

RB: As poor as the Patriots are at running back, it is still only the team's seventh priority. If the team does spend a pick on a back, it can't afford to draft another mediocre player. The only way the team would pick a running back would be to jump in the first round, when it could get Mississippi's Deuce McAllister or Wisconsin's Michael Bennett, two guys capable of having an instant impact. Otherwise, the Patriots will try to get along with last year's third-round pick, J.R. Redmond, third-down back Kevin Faulk or a patched-up Robert Edwards.

2000 DRAFT

2. Adrian Klemm, OT Injured early in 2000. Will start in 2001; the question is where? 3. J.R. Redmond, RB Needs to stay healthy to show he can carry load as a starter. 4. Greg Robinson-Randall, OT Overmatched as a rookie, but could start at OT or G in 2001.

5a. Dave Stachelski, TE Wound up with Saints and caught a TD pass in playoffs. 5b. Jeff Marriott, DT

Patriots cut him, but Rams think he has a future as an OL

6a. Antwan Harris, CB

Has a chance to unseat a veteran DB in camp. 6b. Tom Brady, QB Likely to hang on to the third quarterback job.

6c. David Nugent, DL May have found his niche as a backup LE.

7a. Casey Tisdale, DT Cut during camp. Added to Chiefs practice squad after season.

7b. Patrick Pass, RB Had chances to earn playing time but is limited physically.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Patriots picked well when Bill Parcells was at the helm, but they haven't had much success with the draft since he left to run the Jets. A series of marginal drafts. including last year's disasterzero starters out of 10 pickshave greatly reduced the talent level on this team.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	13	9	10	8	10
Starters	3	0	1	3	0
Backups	0	2	5	2	7
Other team	3	4	1	1	3
Out of NFL	7	3	3	2	0

PATRIOTS WAR ROOM

While the Patriots continue to struggle and rebuild on the field, they are working toward a more successful structure in the front office. Coach Bill Belichick has the final say on every decision relating to free agency and the draft. He spends hours watching tape, reading reports and evaluating personnel-and he loves it. He probably is more prepared than any coach in the NFL in terms of player acquisitions. Bobby Grier is no longer the team's personnel director. Belichick's right-hand man is Scott Pioli, who came to New England from the Jets. Pioli's job is to organize the personnel department, oversee the scouts and advise the coach on all personnel decisions. Outsiders criticized the Patriots for not bringing in a general manager, but Belichick and Pioli work well together, and the team's scouts know exactly the qualities the second-year coach wants in his players. As a result, all the people in the front office are on the same page when it comes to picking talent. The Patriots put a premium on toughness, productivity and athleticism. The team's scouting staff has a lot of experience, but the organization will miss veteran personnel scout Mike Pollom, who died from cancer last year.

THE OUTLOOK

The Patriots have many holes to fill but a limited number of draft picks. Because of prior trades, the team will pick twice in both the fifth and sixth rounds but won't pick at all in the fourth or seventh rounds.

This is an important draft for Belichick to prove himself. The team began a rapid decline soon after his mentor, Bill Parcells, left town after the 1996 season. It is Belichick's job to pick up the pieces of an organization that was crumbling when he arrived over a year ago.

The priority on offense is to find a tackle for the left side and a receiver with good size. The Patriots would like to find a running back, but if they can't get an impact player, it's likely that Redmond will get another chance to carry the load.

Defensively, the wish list begins with tackle and includes cornerback. Look for Belichick to get a defensive lineman in free agency and use the draft to pick a quality cornerback and a couple of linebackers for depth. - The War Room

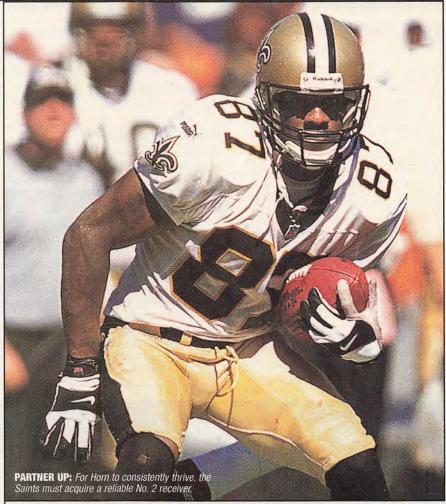
TEAM NEEDS

CB: Although they apparently are happy with their current group of cornerbacks, the Saints have a slew of average coverage men. Since the departure of Ashley Ambrose last offseason, no one in the team's secondary stands out. Steve Israel, 32, will be back in the mix after missing all of last season with a knee injury, but he isn't the answer. The Saints like to gamble on defense with blitzing linebackers and safeties. If they are to continue to do so successfully, coach Jim Haslett should bring in a guy who can play on an island. One player who comes to mind is Mississippi's Ken Lucas, an underrated guy with the speed and size to be a great NFL corner. Even if the team really is happy with its cornerbacks, Lucas would be a great fit because he would have time to adjust to the NFL game.

WR: After Jake Reed's foot injury opened the door for Keith Poole in the second half of the season, Poole failed to produce. His inadequacy enhanced Willie Jackson's role, but with Joe Horn sidelined late by an injury, the Saints finished the season lacking a threat at the second and third receiver spots. In order to give Horn some breathing room next season, the Saints must acquire a legitimate threat for the No. 2 spot. If they choose to draft a receiver, UCLA's Freddie Mitchell is a playmaker who could slip to them as a result of all the talented underclassmen in this year's crop.

S: Darren Perry and Rob Kelly are capable nickel guys, but neither can be considered a productive starter. Haslett has done a terrific job in his schemes of protecting his defensive backs, but it's time for an upgrade. The Saints need a young, feisty safety who can patrol the center of the field without any help, because SS Sammy Knight spends a ton of time around the line of scrimmage. One sound center fielder is Notre Dame's Tony Driver, who is grossly underrated and has impressive skills that could make him a great pro. ILB: New Orleans lucked out last season in signing veteran Darrin Smith. His experience and leadership kept the defense intact. In fact, Smith at times looked as fast as his younger cohorts on the outside. But Smith is an unrestricted free agent and he will turn 31 in April. The Saints should try to find a heady player who fits their system. Michigan State's T.J. Turner is a tough guy with nice speed. He may not have an immediate impact, but he is worth taking a chance on. The Saints could probably get Turner in the mid to late rounds.

TE: Cam Cleeland can't get it right. In the preseason, he ruptured his Achilles' ten-



don. He ruptured it again while playing golf during his rehab stint. He displayed some Pro Bowl potential in his first two seasons, but he can't be counted on. Andrew Glover was solid as a fill-in, but he will be 34 in August. Reserves Lamont Hall and Dave Stachelski are gifted players but lack experience, and Austin Wheatley is strictly a special teams guy. The team likes to run out of two-tight end sets, and it will need some insurance at the position to do so this season. Oklahoma State's Khary Jackson is a solid, all-around tight end it could pick up late.

FB: Shocked? Don't be. Although Terrelle Smith, a fourth-round pick last year, had an outstanding rookie campaign, he has been plagued by lingering back pain all offseason. Smith has two bulging disks in his back which could affect his production next season. The Saints' offense is predicated on a solid running attack and a passing game that is reliant on play-action. That said, a solid fullback is required. Also, many think Ricky Williams' solid performance-he rushed for 1,000 yards before

	PROJECTED	DEPTH	CHART
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Jeff Blake	LE .	Darren Howard
	Aaron Brooks		Willie Whitehead
FB	Terrelle Smith	LT I	Norman Hand
	■ Brian Milne*		Martin Chase
RB	Ricky Williams	RT .	La'Roi Glover
	Terry Allen*		Jared Tomich*
WR	Joe Horn	RE .	Joe Johnson
	■ Willie Jackson*		Bobby Setzer
WR	Jake Reed	LOLB	Keith Mitchell
	Keith Poole		Donta' Jones*
TE	Andrew Glover	MLB	Darrin Smith*
	Lamont Hall		Charlie Clemons
LT	William Roaf	ROLB	Mark Fields
	Daryl Terrell		Donta Jones
LG	Wally Williams	LC	Steve Israel
	■ Tom Ackerman		Alex Moldeni*
C	Jerry Fontenot	SS	Sammy Knight
	■ Tom Ackerman		Chris Oldham
RG	Chris Naeole	FS .	Darren Perry*
	■ Tom Ackerman		Rob Kelly*
RT	Kyle Turley	RC .	Kevin Mathis*
	Marcus Price		Fred Weary
K	None	P .	Toby Gowin

suffering a season-ending injury-had much to do with Smith's tenacious lead blocking. Look for the Saints to pick up a guy such as LSU's Tommy Banks in the draft. Banks excels as a lead blocker.

THE OUTLOOK

If the Saints truly are satisfied with their current corners, expect a receiver to be the team's first priority. Haslett was pleased with his receiver corps' ability to step up when injuries hit last season, but the patchwork operation needs help.

Cornerback will be addressed early; look for Haslett to obtain a competent cover guy no later than the third round. That won't be the end of the help for the Saints' secondary. Age is a growing concern at free safety, so look for the team to try to improve at that position, too.

Expect G.M. Randy Mueller and Haslett to look for help at tight end, middle linebacker and fullback as well. All three positions boast talent but lack depth.

The Saints think they are a player or two away from the Super Bowl. That being the case, what can't be overlooked are their salary-cap issues.

Mueller and Haslett don't have much money to spend this offseason, so the 2001 draft will make or break this team's chances of playing for a championship next January. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

2. Darren Howard, DE

Was incredibly productive as a rookie. Has star potential.

4. Terrelle Smith, FB

Nasty demeanor earned him a starting job. He'll keep it awhile.

5a. Tutan Reyes, OT

Did not play as rookie, but team needs him to fill a reserve role.

5b. Austin Wheatley, TE

Produced on special teams, but future as a tight end is bleak.

5c. Chad Morton, RB

His versatility and productivity earned him playing time.

6a. Marc Bulger, QB Cut before season. Spent time

on Falcons' practice squad. 6b. Michael Hawthorne, DB Played in nickel, dime defenses,

Could earn more snaps in 2001. 6c. Sherrod Gideon, WR

Cut before season. Spent time

on Miami's practice squad.

7. Kevin Houser, TE

Ability as long snapper earned him playing time.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The much-maligned Mike Ditka-Bill Kuharich era wasn't a total bust for the Saints, because RB Ricky Williams has emerged as a talent. Over the past five years, the team has used the draft to add significant depth, which allowed it to stay competitive despite a rash of injuries last fall.

Year	'96	'97	'98	199	2000
Total picks	10	7	8	1	9
Starters	0	1	2	1	2
Backups	2	4	1	0	5
Other team	2	0	3	0	1
Out of NFL	6	2	2	0	1

SAINTS WAR ROOM

The Saints' front office, led by G.M. Randy Mueller, has made one of the biggest turnarounds in NFL history. As a result of astute personnel decisions, the Saints have changed from hapless loser into a playoff team. They did it with a lot of midlevel, free-agent acquisitions limitations on picks from the Ricky Williams draft in '99 prevented them from building entirely through the draft. Coach Jim Haslett, who also deserves a lot of credit for this turnaround, appears to be working closely with Mueller on all personnel decisions. Haslett and Mueller have done a nice job of upgrading the team's athleticism, speed and matchup capabilities, which were not a strength a year ago. Also on hand is Mickey Loomis, who was Mueller's righthand man in Seattle, and pro personnel director Charles Bailey, a holdover from the Bill Kuharich-Mike Ditka regime, who does an excellent job. The Saints have made good use of their salarycap money in the last year, have made few bad decisions and have not overspent for their free agents. With a full complement of draft picks, they should continue upgrading and retooling this roster. Theirs is a front office—and a team—to be reckoned with.

IANTS

CB: Dave Thomas was the last man standing last year as the Giants' No. 2 cornerback after Conrad Hamilton and Phillippi Sparks were let go in the preseason. Thomas' effort last season can't be questioned, but his ability sure can. The rangy corner was picked on constantly by opponents, and he will need to find a role in the team's nickel package next season. Jason Sehorn is an unrestricted free agent, but all signs point to his return. Still, with Thomas being a big question mark, a change here is inevitable. Keep in mind that Tampa Bay's Ronde Barber is an unrestricted free agent and probably wouldn't be opposed to joining his brother, running back Tiki Barber, in the Big Apple. In the draft, a guy the Giants would love to get is Syracuse's Will Allen, who has all the physical skills and is mentally tough. Allen not only is instinctive vs. the pass, but also is willing against the run. **OLB:** Ryan Phillips is solid against the run, although his coverage skills were often attacked and exposed last season. Speedy reserve Pete Monty was only average filling in for Phillips in passing situations, and an

upgrade here is needed. You must remember that Phillips spent the season playing alongside Jessie Armstead and Mike Barrow, so he was getting help. If the Giants can get a quick guy with a tenacious attitude, their linebacker corps will mirror the famed Bermuda Triangle. The Triangle, which featured both Armstead and Barrow, boosted the University of Miami to prominence in the early '90s. Look for defensive coordinator John Fox to push general manager Ernie Accorsi toward obtaining a menacing presence such as Florida State's Tommy Polley.

TE: Pete Mitchell was all but fazed out of the offense by the end of the season. The onetime starter played behind Howard Cross and split time with blocking specialist Dan Campbell. Mitchell is an unrestricted free agent and is likely to go. Cross' age speaks for itself and Campbell's poor feel for the passing game rounds out three perfectly good reasons a change is required. The Giants really would benefit from drafting a sure-handed player such as Arizona State's Todd Heap. Quarterback Kerry Collins likes to throw to

his tight end, and a big target such as Heap (6-45/s, 235) would only make Collins better.

LE LT	■ Michael Strahan ■ Cornelius Griffin ■ Christian Peter*
	Cornelius Griffin
LT	
LT	Christian Peter*
	Ryan Hale
RT	Keith Hamilton
	Comelius Griffin
RE	Cedric Jones
	Jeremiah Parker
SLB	Ryan Phillips*
	Brandon Short
MLB	Mike Barrow
	Pete Monty*
WLB	Jessie Armstead
	Jack Golden
LC	Dave Thomas
	Reggie Stephens
SS	Sam Games
	Lyle West
FS	Shaun Williams
	Omar Stoutmire*
RC I	Jason Sehom*
	Emmanuel McDanie
D 1	Brad Maynard*
	RC P y team

G: Glenn Parker, acquired last season as a free agent, will be 35 in April and missed several games because of injuries in 2000. Parker's play was fine when he was healthy, but the Giants need more youth on their front line. Nobody likes to draft a guard, but late in this draft may be the place to get a good one. The team won't risk taking a chance on anyone early. Nevertheless, guard is a need, so a guy such as Notre Dame's Mike Gandy could really help.

K: The Giants had suspect kickoff coverage throughout the regular season. It's safe to say their poor coverage was a result of Brad Daluiso's weak leg. Look for Daluiso to be coach Jim Fassel's scapegoat for the team's poor kickoff coverage. Daluiso's distance was absent all season. His pop-gun production called for the signing of Jaret Holmes, who was just average. So look for one able leg to assume the responsibility next season. Remember, the Giants' patchwork kickoff security cost them their biggest touchdown of the season, in Super Bowl 35. They could gain from spending a late-round pick on a kicker such as Arkansas State's Nick Gatto. OT: Lomas Brown is about to run out of gas. Next season will be his 17th. On the right side, Luke Petitgout has been everything the Giants thought he'd be when they used a firstround pick on him in 1999. In fact, Petitgout has shown signs that he's ready to take over for Brown on Collins' blindside when Brown retires. Still, the Giants need a dependable blocker who can bring depth on the edge. Fassel's first priority is to protect his quarterback. As a result, expect him to pick up a nimble athlete, such as Florida State's Tarlos Thomas. Thomas is solid on his feet, and if he returns from a knee injury that cost him the second half of his senior season, he could be

THE OUTLOOK

a steal.

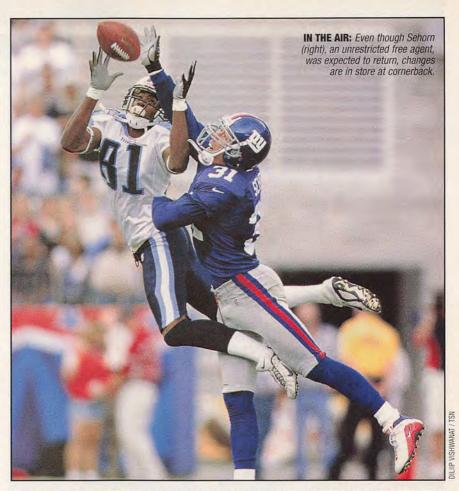
Last season, Fox did a terrific job of hiding Thomas, the questionable cornerback. Fox used sophisticated coverage schemes and selective blitzing to hide his unit's weakness, but it is time for a change. Accorsi and Fassel know this is a glaring need, so expect it to be addressed early.

Another weak link in the NFC champs' armor is at outside linebacker. Phillips played only adequately on the perimeter. Routinely, he was the focal point of opponents' underneath passing attacks as he struggled to cover quicker backs. Certainly, improvement on the strong side is needed.

You also can expect the Giants to improve their situation at tight end. Stalwart Cross will turn 34 in August, and Mitchell, an unrestricted free agent, is missing the playmaking ability he displayed in '99, when he caught 58 passes.

Kicker is another concern. Holmes was added to the roster last season because of Daluiso's consistently short kickoffs. It's obvious that the team would be better off if only one player handled all the kicking duties.

The Giants will probably try to upgrade themselves at guard, too. -The War Room



2000 DRAFT

1. Ron Dayne, RB Inside runner had solid season. Should get better with time.

2. Cornelius Griffin, DT Had great rookie season and should win starting job in '01.

3. Ron Dixon, WR-KR Kick returner primarily. May get chance to catch more passes.

4. Brandon Short, LB His biggest contributions came

on special teams.

5. Ralph Brown, DB Injured most of last season. Needs to play well early in '01 6. Dhani Jones, LB

Mostly a special teams player. Team thinks future is at LB. 7. Jeremiah Parker, DE Was used strictly in a reserve role last season.

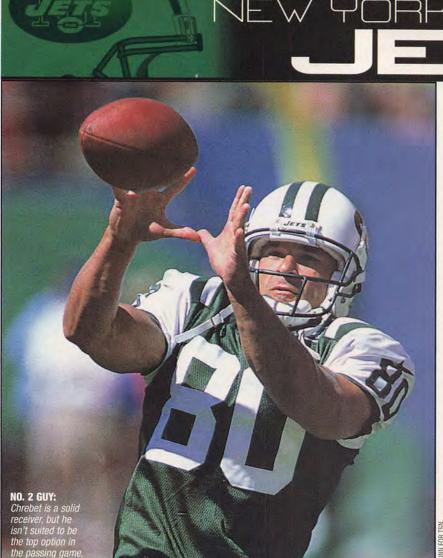
FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Giants approach the draft like no other organization in the league. They disregard where a prospect is on other teams' draft boards. That attitude has cost the Giants in terms of value over the years. Still, some players selected early in recent drafts were key parts in last season's Super Bowl run.

90	9/	98	99	2000
7	8	6	9	7
2	4	1	1	0
0	3	1	7	7
5	1	3	1	0
0	0	1	0	0
	7 2 0 5	7 8 2 4 0 3 5 1	7 8 6 2 4 1 0 3 1 5 1 3	7 8 6 9 2 4 1 1 0 3 1 7 5 1 3 1

GIANTS WAR ROOM

The Giants went to the Super Bowl and did it in a very economical fashion, ranking 29th in player salaries. With on-field success comes higher salaries, though, and G.M. Ernie Accorsi must try to keep the team intact and add a few key components. Accorsi has a great handle on his team and works well with coach Jim Fassel. Personnel decisions are basically handled by this duo, though input from coaches and scouts is a big part of the picture, and Accorsi gives the people around him a sense of importance in the process. The Giants' grading system categorizes players in terms of size, speed and athletic ability, and forces the team to stay true to the grades on draft day. As a result, you will not see a lot of exotic picks or players selected because of need. Rather, the Giants likely will take the best player on the board, according to how they have him graded, almost regardless of position. It is a good way to eliminate mistakes on draft day. Accorsi has one of the most-respected veteran scouting staffs in the NFL, and this is an organization that has everybody on the same page. It may not be the most exciting group in the NFL, but its members are very prepared, do a solid job, and nobody can argue with their success.



TH CHART TEAM NEEDS

FS: This position was a revolving door last season and is a major area of need. The remaining starter, Chris Hayes, is an unrestricted free agent who was unlikely to return. Scott Frost, a restricted free agent, also seemed likely to leave. Nick Ferguson, who had some good moments last year, has a chance to stick as a backup, but the team wants to make a significant upgrade. Expect the Jets to go the free-agency route to try to stabilize the position. If they don't sign a free agent, the Jets could use a second- or thirdround pick on a player such as Memphis' Idrees Bashir, Kansas State's Jarrod Cooper or Penn State's James Boyd.

WR: The club likes Wayne Chrebet and Laveranues Coles, but Dedric Ward didn't produce in a starter's role as the team had hoped and was unlikely to return. New York is adopting a West Coast scheme under new coach Herman Edwards and needs to add some size opposite Chrebet, who is a better fit as a No. 2 wideout. The free-agent pool is weak, so the team likely will need to add a contributor from the draft. Second-round

options are Clemson's Rod Gardner and Kansas State's Quincy Morgan, both of whom have nice size. If the Jets wait until the third round to address the position, they could get Ohio State's Reggie Germany or Texas A&M's Robert Ferguson.

DT: The move from a $\overline{3}$ -4 to a 4-3, one-gap system under Edwards means the team needs to find inside help in the draft. That holds true even if Jason Ferguson is re-signed to play one of the tackle spots. The other tackle of note, Shane Burton, is more of a two-gap player. Because there is an excellent pool of defensive tackles in the draft, it makes sense for the team to grab one in the first or second round. Don't be surprised if the team selects Miami's Damione Lewis, who has the special quickness to get upfield, in the first round. Lewis would be a great fit in the Jets' new scheme.

K: After a shaky season, John Hall is no sure thing to return. But the Jets are more likely to look in free agency than the draft for a potential replacement. Brett Conway, signed late last season, also may not be back. **RB:** Team officials are making it clear they intend to use the draft to add a quality reserve to the running back corps.

Overworked Curtis Martin carried the ball

Overworked Curtis Martin carried the ball 316 times and caught 70 passes last season. Fullback Richie Anderson handles a lot of the receiving duties with Martin in the backfield, but New York would like to get a powerful runner to take some of the shortyardage carries off Martin's hands. Don't be surprised if the Jets use a pick in the middle rounds to get a bruising back such as Nebraska's Correll Buckhalter.

DE: This is a position with great upside for the team. Second-year players John Abraham, drafted to be a rush linebacker in the Jets' old 3-4 scheme, and Shaun Ellis will be the starting ends. Ellis, who will play on the left side, has tremendous potential, but he's not there yet. Look for Abraham to emerge as an impact pass rusher on the right side, though there might be concerns about whether he has the bulk to take on the run. Depth is lacking at the position. Look for the Jets to select an end with a middle- or lateround pick, or to shop for a bargain in free agency.

LB: The team made some big changes to adjust to its salary-cap problems. It re-signed Mo Lewis but let Roman Phifer, Bryan Cox and Dwayne Gordon go right before the free-agency period. Of course, the move to the 4-3 also means the Jets don't need as many linebackers. Lewis, James Farrior and Marvin Jones will form what should be a solid starting trio. Depth and age are concerns, so look for the team in the middle or late rounds to draft a linebacker who it can develop.

OT: This position lacks depth. The situation was so bad last year that team officials had

	PKUJECIED I OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	■ Vinny Testaverde	LE	Shaun Ellis
	Chad Pennington		Rick Lyle*
FB	Richie Anderson	DT	Jason Ferguson*
	Jerald Sowell		None
RB	Curtis Martin	DT	Shane Burton
	None		Jason Wiltz
WR	Dedric Ward*	RE	John Abraham
	Laveranues Coles		Eric Ogbogu
WR	Wayne Chrebet	SLB I	Mo Lewis
	Windrell Hayes		J.J.Syvrud
TE	Anthony Becht	MLB I	Marvin Jones
	Jake Moreland		None
LT	Jason Fabini	WLB I	James Farrior
	Jumbo Elliott*		None
LG	Kerry Jenkins	LC I	Aaron Glenn
	David Loverne		Ray Mickens
C	Kevin Mawae	SS	Victor Green
	J.P. Machado		Nick Ferguson
RG	Randy Thomas	FS	Chris Hayes*
	Cornell Green		Scott Frost
RT	Ryan Young	RC I	Marcus Coleman
	Chad Slaughter	1	Tony Scott
K	John Hall	P	Tom Tupa

to re-sign Jumbo Elliott, but there is a good chance he won't return. Ryan Young and Jason Fabini are entrenched at the right and left tackle positions, respectively, but the team needs to bring in another player in the late rounds. West Virginia's Matthew Wilson would be a possibility.

THE OUTLOOK

New York used its four picks in the first round of last year's draft to lay the foundation for the future. Now, all it needs to do is build on that foundation with some quality players at positions that are coming up short or feeling the effects of age.

Offensively, the Jets are in good shape up front; their five starting linemen all will be back. However, they clearly need a starting wide receiver and a quality reserve at running back. Look for an early pick to be used on a wideout with size who can contribute right away. The lets could wait until the fourth or fifth round to find a back to spell Martin.

Defensively, the team needs to come out of the draft with a quality tackle who can help immediately. The free safety position has to be upgraded, and the depth at linebacker needs attention. Overall, there are not too many positions that need overhauls, which gives the front office the luxury of drafting a top athlete instead of forcing a pick on a position of need. That's something that is critical for a team but often goes unnoticed. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1a. Shaun Ellis, DE Team would like for him to take over starting spot at left end. 1b. John Abraham, LB

Team's top pass rusher when healthy. Expected to play RE.

1c. Chad Pennington, QB Answer at QB in long term. Will hold clipboard in short term.

1d. Anthony Becht, TE

Needs to become more of a factor in the passing game.

3. Laveranues Coles, WR Improved during season but used only in three-wideout sets.



5. Windrell Hayes, WR Showed some flashes as a rookie. Pegged as No. 4 WR.

6. Tony Scott, CB

Might have won job as team's fourth cornerback.

7. Richard Seals, DT

Cut before season. Spent time on Jags' practice squad.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

Last year's draft, with future starters QB Chad Pennington, DE Shaun

Ellis, OLB John Abraham and TE Anthony Becht, has this franchise going in the right direction. For a few years, the Jets were shackled on draft day because of compensation picks sent to New England for Bill Parcells and Curtis Martin.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	6	11	12	8	8
Starters	1	3	1	2	2
Backups	2	1	3	3	5
Other team	1	0	3	1	0
Out of NFL	2	7	5	2	1

JETS WAR ROOM

There is a new structure in the front office, and there might be more changes after the draft. Running the show is Terry Bradway, who comes to the Jets after years as the personnel director in Kansas City. Bradway is a well-respected administrator and evaluator. He is a low-key, easy-going guy, so it will be interesting to see how he adjusts to the spotlight in New York. Bradway's first task was to hire a head coach. He picked Herman Edwards, who looks like a good fit in terms of personnel decisions. He is one of the few head coaches who has a background in scouting. Edwards obviously will have a good feel for what he wants in free agency and the draft, and Bradway always has included his coaching staff in personnel decisions. Veteran scouting director Dick Haley will work through the draft, but there is a good chance he will retire and Bradway will bring in his own scouting director. The Jets have a scouting staff with a lot of experience, so the adjustment to the new front-office structure shouldn't be difficult. Bradway, however, has a huge challenge ahead: He must hit on all of his draft picks, make good free-agent choices and weave one philosophy throughout an organization with a lot of new faces.



TEAM NEEDS

OLB: The Raiders' scouting staff should be commended for bringing veteran William Thomas aboard last season, but now this team's linebacker corps needs to get younger. Thomas, a 10-year veteran and unrestricted free agent, was a solid cover linebacker and adequate against the run. Fellow linebacker Elijah Alexander has nine years of NFL experience. Both players have little time left in their careers, and the team can't keep ignoring this position in the draft. Linebacker was the glaring need last year, and it remains so this time around. Near the end of the first round, when the Raiders make their first pick (28th overall), Florida State's Tommy Polley and Southern California's Markus Steele are expected to be available. Either linebacker would make sense for the Raiders.

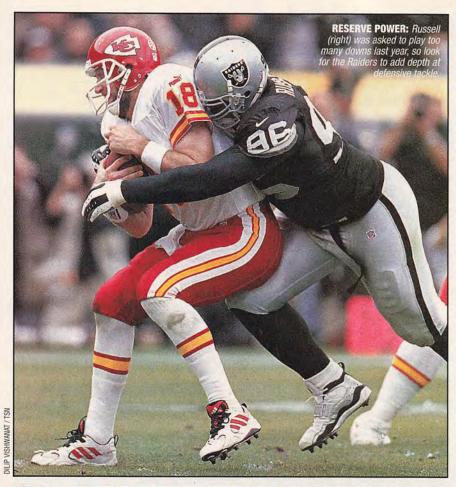
DT: After Darrell Russell and Grady Jackson. the cupboard is bare for Oakland. This pair was forced to log way too many minutes last season and could benefit from some quality help. Josh Taves fills in nicely for spurts, but he seems to be a better fit at defensive end. Solid

veterans usually are available in free agency, but regardless of whether the Raiders choose that route or the draft, they need to add depth at this spot. If they go the draft route, the Raiders can wait until the middle rounds. Names that fit Oakland's needs and are expected to be on the board in the middle rounds include Ohio State's Ryan Pickett and Kansas State's Mario Fatafehi.

WR: Coach Jon Gruden built this team's offense around a strong ground game, but an upgrade in Oakland's receiver corps will allow more flexibility in his play calling. Tim Brown is getting old but still getting the job done. Veteran receiver Andre Rison was a nice addition for last season. However, it's time to replace James Jett, because the vertical receiver isn't a good fit for Gruden's system. Both Jett and Rison were free agents. The Raiders need to bring in young receivers to learn by getting a daily look at Brown in action. Jerry Porter, a second-round pick last year, accomplished little on the field. The Raiders could find talented receivers such as Kansas State's Quincy Morgan and Miami's Reggie Wayne available in the second round.

	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Rich Gannon	LE	Tony Bryant
	Bobby Hoying		Regan Upshaw*
FB	Jon Ritchie	LT	Darrell Russell
	Zack Crockett*		Roderick Coleman
RB	Tyrone Wheatley	RT	Grady Jackson
	Napoleon Kaufman		Junior loane
WR	Tim Brown	RE	Lance Johnstone *
	■ Andre Rison*		Josh Taves
WR	James Jett*	OLB	■ William Thomas*
	Jerry Porter		Eric Barton
TE	■ Rickey Dudley*	MLB	Greg Biekert
	Jeremy Brigham		Bobby Brooks
LT	Barry Sims	OLB	Elijah Alexander
	■ Matt Stinchcomb		Travian Smith
LG	Steve Wisniewski	LC	Charles Woodson
	■ Barry Sims		Darrien Gordon
C	Barret Robbins	SS	Marquez Pope*
	Adam Treu		Johnnie Harris
RG	■ Mo Collins	FS	Anthony Dorsett
	Darryl Ashmore		Calvin Branch
RT	Lincoln Kennedy	RC 1	Eric Allen
	Darryl Ashmore		■ Tory James
K	S. Janikowski	P	Shane Lechler

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.



2000 DRAFT

1. Sebastian Janikowski, K Struggled early, but team still has a lot of confidence in him.

2. Jerry Porter, WR

Will be expected to add youth to an aging receiver corps in '01.

4. Junior Ioane, DT

Won a roster spot but never got into a game.

5. Shane Lechler, P

Did nothing to dispel thoughts he could be the next Ray Guy.

7a. Mondriel Fulcher, TE

If Rickey Dudley leaves, this H-back could play a bigger role.



7b. Cliffton Black, DB Cut by the Raiders and did not play in the NFL last season.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

For a team that played in the AFC title game, the Raiders have a surprisingly dismal draft record. Aside from Pro Bowl CB Charles Woodson, the Oakland brass has reached more than any front office. If not for some keen free-agent moves, this team would be among the least talented in the league.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	7	6	9	7	6
Starters	2	2	3	2	0
Backups	0	2	2	2	5
Other team	1	0	1	2	0
Out of NFL	4	2	3	1	1

RAIDERS WAR ROOM

The Raiders are one of the more efficient and mysterious front offices in the NFL. Jon Gruden & Co. have upgraded the roster in spite of severe salary-cap problems. But, as always, owner Al Davis is the final decision maker. Davis is one of the rare owners who watches film, reads reports and is actively involved in all draft meetings, though he seems to be giving Gruden more freedom to get the players Gruden wants. The coaching staff is very hands-on in terms of evaluating players. The team has one of the most experienced scouting departments in the NFL, and because the scouts are so in tune with owner Al Davis' system, there normally is little debate within the organization. In the last two years, the front office was upgraded with the additions of Mike Lombardi, former director of the Browns' scouting department, and Chet Franklin, who returned to the Raiders after a stint as director of the Saints' personnel department. Senior assistant Bruce Allen is a master at massaging the draft-making moves to acquire more picks or moving within the draft to acquire the players the Raiders want. He also has a knack for leading opponents in 10 different directions. As a result, the Raiders are one of the toughest teams to figure out in the draft process.

S: Marquez Pope is a backup-type player who always seems to find his way into the starting lineup, as he did last year. But Pope must be replaced for this defense to reach the next level. Free-agent acquisition Anthony Dorsett also has plenty of room for improvement. Youngsters such as Johnnie Harris, Eric Johnson and Calvin Branch all will get legitimate shots in camp. Because of the youth they already have on board, the Raiders likely will wait until Day 2 of the draft to add help. G: Pro Bowl player Steve Wisniewski again

played at a high level, and Mo Collins made a nice transition from tackle, but depth will be concern if the team keeps Barry Sims at left tackle in place of Matt Stinchcomb. Trading Gennaro DiNapoli to the Titans could come back to haunt the Raiders. The good news is that quality guards can be found as late as the sixth and seventh rounds. Expect the Raiders to pick at least one prospect to develop under Wisniewski.

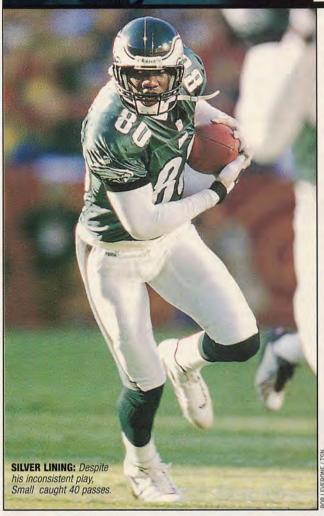
QB: Rich Gannon, who will turn 36 next season, has been an excellent on-field leader the last two years, but he can't go on forever. It's difficult to predict when a player like Gannon, who has enjoyed a nice late-career resurgence, will hit the wall, but it can't be too far off. Though he might never become the starter, Bobby Hoying has a fan in Gruden. Scott Dreisbach, who has been plagued by injuries his first two seasons, has some intriguing skills, but Gruden isn't prepared to rest the team's future on him. Gruden has a great eye for talent at this position, so look for him to target a quarterback late in the draft. Players he could consider include Washington's Marques Tuiasosopo and LSU's Josh Booty.

For a team that made it all the way to the AFC championship game, the Raiders have plenty of holes to fill. There's no telling how much longer aging stars such as Gannon, Brown and Wisniewski will last, which makes this year's draft critical with regard to the longterm success of the team.

Some solid additions in free agency (i.e. Thomas and Rison) helped mask a rather unimpressive draft a year ago, and it's time for the front office to concentrate on potential problems at outside linebacker and wide receiver. Now that the Raiders have shored up their problems in the kicking game, look for them to spend their first-round pick on a linebacker or wideout.

Taking a project such as Porter in the second round last year was a big risk, and the team's brain trust would be smart to target a more polished player this time.

Defensively, the most obvious need is an athletic outside linebacker, but upgrading the depth along the defensive line and adding competition at both safety spots also are goals. Coordinator Chuck Bresnahan did a tremendous job with the team's defense last season, and he's the type of innovative coach who could work wonders with more speed in the deep secondary and fresher bodies up front. The Raiders always have targeted speed players on offense, but that will be the top criteria on defense this year as well. -The War Room



NEEDS

WR: Veterans Charles Johnson and Torrance Small came on at the end of the season but were not consistent. Rookies Todd Pinkston and Gari Scott made little impact on offense. Quarterback Donovan McNabbwho seems to be developing into a star-had some chemistry with Johnson, but the lack of big-play ability was too evident. The team's struggles at receiver led to a predictable passing game and a strained running attack. Na Brown has shown promise, but McNabb needs a goto guy. Expect the Eagles to try to find one for him. If they get a chance to draft somebody such as Miami's Santana Moss or Oregon State's Chad Johnson, they should

jump at it. An upgrade at receiver would greatly enhance the team's West Coast offense. The Eagles need a weapon who can have an immediate impact; waiting around until the late rounds won't do.

RB: The running back-by-committee approach worked when it had to. Still, if coach Andy Reid has his way, it will never have to work again. There is growing concern about Duce Staley's foot injury, which landed him on injured reserve after he was hurt in Week 5. The injury is uncommon and could hamper Staley in the future. No matter how things turn out, the Eagles need a solid No. 2 back. If Reid doesn't find a bargain in free agency, he might want to take a look at a player such as Massachusetts' Marcel Shipp. Shipp won't be an every-down runner out of the gate, but he is the type of guy who could be a nice change-of-pace back and also add some depth.

DE: The team needs a run-stuffer on the left side. Brandon Whiting and Mike Mamula, who shared time at left end, are

undersized and neither is great against the run. Mamula actually is more of a thirddown pass rusher.

TE: OK, we know what you're thinking. With Pro Bowl selection Chad Lewis and red-zone menace Jeff Thomason on the roster, it would seem like the Eagles are well-stocked at tight end. But Lewis isn't very durable and Thomason is an unrestricted free agent, and his return is not a sure thing. Third-stringer Luther Broughton is a great athlete, but he is terribly inconsistent and cannot be counted on for anything but a situational role. Losing Lewis or Thomason will be a disaster if an able body isn't waiting in the wings. McNabb is extremely reliant on his tight end, so the Eagles can't ignore this need. Texas-El Paso's Brian Natkin can get open underneath and would fit nicely in the passing game, which is predicated on precision.

C: Bubba Miller was adequate in his first season as a starter, but the interior of the line was constantly under fire. Unfortunately, Miller didn't hold up well vs. stunts and blitzes. His line calls were solid throughout, but physically he is lacking. The Eagles are looking at this situation and don't have to make a move, but Arizona's Bruce Wiggins is a guy who can play right away.

G: Many of the Eagles' problems running between the tackles stemmed from left guard John Welbourn's inability to runblock. Welbourn is a natural tackle who played out of position, so the Eagles need an upgrade. Jermane Mayberry, who can play four line positions, has finally come around on the other side, but there is no depth behind him. The Eagles would like to start Mayberry and Bobby Williams, a second-round pick last year, at guard and make Welbourn the No. 3 tackle.

ILB: Pro Bowl middle linebacker Jeremiah Trotter asked for big money as a restricted free agent, and his price tag might be too high for a team that boasts a lot of talent on defense. Behind Trotter on the depth chart last year was James Darling, who is an unrestricted free agent and isn't likely to return. It might be pessimistic, but Reid could wake up in Week 1 next season with a real problem in the middle of his defense. The Eagles need some insurance, and their up-tempo defensive style could use a guy such as Western Illinois' Edgerton Hartwell.

The Eagles entered the offseason well under the salary cap. Don't expect the extra loot to prompt a lot of activity in free agency. They were faced with re-signing

DOLLOTED DERTH OHART

	PROJECTED I	JEPTH	CHART
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB I	Donovan McNabb	LE I	Brandon Whiting
	Koy Detmer*		Mike Mamula
FB I	Cecil Martin	LT .	Hollis Thomas*
	Stanley Pritchett		Paul Grasmanis*
RB	■ Duce Staley	RT I	Corey Simon
	Chris Warren*		Darwin Walker
WR I	Charles Johnson	RE .	Hugh Douglas
1	Na Brown	1 1 1 E	Uhuru Hamiter
WR	Torrance Small	SLB	Carlos Emmons
	Todd Pinkston	Production of the last of the	Mike Caldwell
TE I	Chad Lewis	MLB	Jeremiah Trotter
	Jeff Thomason*		James Darling*
LT I	■ Tra Thomas	WLB	Barry Gardner
	John Welbourn		Ike Reese
LG I	John Welbourn	LC	Troy Vincent
4	Doug Brzezinski		Jason Bostic
C	Bubba Miller	SS I	Damon Moore
-	Ryan Schau		Tim Hauck*
RG I	Jermane Mayberry	FS	Brian Dawkins
- I	Bobby Williams		Damon Moore
RT	Jon Runyan	RC I	Bobby Taylor
	John Welbourn		Al Harris
K	David Akers	P	Sean Landeta
	Can play for any Fringe player *U		
	- Tringe player 0	in coulicie	a noo agont.

Trotter, along with a handful of role players, such as reserve defensive tackle Paul Grasmanis.

That said, Reid will be forced to upgrade the glaring weakness at wide receiver. He shouldn't be too disappointed with his predicament, because there is a bevy of talent at that position in the draft. The Eagles might not be just one player away from a Super Bowl, but a guy to stretch defenses would certainly round out a budding offensive attack. They spent two draft picks on receivers a year ago, but Pinkston and Scott weren't factors.

Between the tackles, particularly at guard, is another area where the team will look to upgrade on offense. Nobody likes to spend a high draft pick on an interior lineman, but Reid and chief operating officer Joe Banner must add depth. Also look for the Eagles to draft a running back. Staley's presence on IR last season illuminated the team's lack of backfield depth.

On defense, the Eagles are a sure bet to acquire a strong safety because Damon Moore was average at best last season. And although reserve Rashard Cook is a willing run defender, he lacks range vs. the pass. Also, look for the Eagles to try to add some depth at tight end and center. —The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Corey Simon, DT

Great rookie year. Will be force in middle for years to come.

2a. Todd Pinkston, WR

Didn't do much, but team still thinks he'll develop with time.

2b. Bobby Williams, G

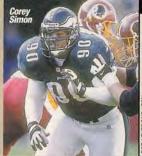
Will be counted on to add depth to improving offensive line.

4. Gari Scott, WR

Did not get into a single game. His future looks bleak.

6a. Thomas Hamner, RB

Cut before season, he later was re-signed to practice squad.



6b. John Frank, DE

Left training camp and took an early retirement.

6c. John Romero, C

Like Hamner, was cut and later re-signed to practice squad.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

QB Donovan McNabb in 1999 and DT Corey Simon in 2000 were great selections by the Eagles, but those picks veil other recent first-round choices who haven't

panned out. Still, the team appears to be moving in the right direction with personnel moves since it hired coach Andy Reid.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	9	11	8	10	7
Starters	2	1	3	4	1
Backups	1	3	1	3	4
Other team	2	4	2	1	0
Out of NFL	4	3	2	2	2

EAGLES WAR ROOM

Coach Andy Reid continues to revitalize this organization, and the entire front office does as good a job as any in the league of getting the most out of its moves. The Eagles do not have the most talented roster in the NFL, but they certainly are on the right track. Veteran executive Tom Modrak runs the personnel department and is well-respected in the NFL after a long career with the Steelers. Modrak is an unassuming person who seems to work well with Reid, the coaching staff and the scouting department. The assistant coaches are loyal to Reid, and he leans on them for considerable input in the draft. Owner Jeffrey Lurie and chief operating officer Joe Banner are involved in personnel decisions, but they do not meddle. Instead, they let the football people do their jobs. The Eagles have a solid pro scouting director in Mike McCartney, but they were saddened at the beginning of last season by the unexpected death of college scouting director John Goeller, who was a well-respected scout. The Eagles are a fairly conservative organization when it comes to the draft. They don't always have the luxury of picking the best athlete available. But they will be very methodical and fill their needs without taking a lot of chances.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

TEAM NEEDS

C: Dermontti Dawson, a 13-year veteran, is

running out of gas. For a number of years, he

was the best in the league at his position, but he's nearing the end and can't seem to stay healthy. The team is not sure if Roger Duffy is the answer, so it would be wise for the Steelers to draft a center to work under Dawson's tutelage. If the Steelers do not use their first pick to reach for Nebraska's Dominic Raiola, expect them to use a second- or thirdround pick on a player such as Wisconsin's Casey Rabach or Minnesota's Ben Hamilton. **DE:** Jeremy Staat is as good as gone. Aaron Smith and Chris Sullivan had disappointing seasons, and Kevin Henry needs to get more rest. The team needs to add size and depth at this position, which is critical to stopping the run in its 3-4 scheme. Look for it to use an early- to middle-round pick on a player with great size, such as Southern Mississippi's Cedric Scott or Nebraska's Kyle Vanden

S: Lee Flowers is solid at strong safety, but

FS Brent Alexander does not cover the type of ground that the team's cornerbacks need him to cover. The two most likely will start at their respective positions again this season, but the Steelers need to upgrade the position with some young talent. The team could draft a gem in Florida State's Derrick Gibson in the first round, but it would be more feasible for the team to use a third- or fourth-round pick on someone like Kansas State's Jarrod Cooper or Washington's Hakim Akbar:

QB: The Steelers seem to be convinced that they can win with Kordell Stewart, but they shouldn't be. Despite his occasional success in the second half of the season last year, Stewart still makes too many mental mistakes and doesn't see the field well enough. Coach Bill Cowher has anointed him the starter for this season, but that doesn't mean the Steelers shouldn't draft a top quarterback to groom for 2002. Kent Graham proved he's not the solution either, but he is a capable backup. Pittsburgh may not address the position at all, but if Purdue's Drew Brees is around in the first round, it makes sense.

OFFENSE DEFENSE QB Kordell Stewart IF Aaron Smith Kent Graham Chris Sullivan FB Dan Krieder Kimo von Oelhoffen C. Fuamatu-Ma'afala Kendrick Clancy ■ Jerome Bettis* Kevin Henry Richard Huntley Chris Combs WR LOLB Jason Gildon Courtney Hawkins* Troy Edwards Mike Vrabel* LILB Earl Holmes Hines Ward Plaxico Burress Donnel Thompson RILB Levon Kirkland Mark Bruener Jerame Tuman John Fiala Wayne Gandy ROLB Joey Porter Larry Tharpe Clark Haggans LG Alan Faneca LC Chad Scott Roger Duffy Deshea Townsend Roger Duffy Ainsley Battles Tom Myslinski Lee Flowers Rich Tylski FS Brent Alexander Tom Myslinski Nakia Codie Marvel Smith D. Washington Larry Tharpe Jason Simmons Kris Brown Josh Miller Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

WR: Despite using a pair of first-round picks on this position the past two years, the Steelers still aren't strong here. Troy Edwards was far too inconsistent in his second year, and rookie Plaxico Burress couldn't have been a bigger disappointment. Contributors Courtney Hawkins and Will Blackwell are unrestricted free agents, and Hines Ward has vet to play up to his potential. If the Steelers cannot find stability in free agency, they can use a fourth- or fifth-round pick to add another receiver with size. It's not likely, because it makes more sense to go the free-agency route to get a receiver with experience, but if the Steelers were to draft a receiver, it would be a player with a lot of upside, such as Eastern Kentucky's Alex Bannister or Arkansas' Eddie "Boo" Williams.

ILB: Earl Holmes and Levon Kirkland were not as effective against the run as they have been in the past, and part of the reason is the unit's lack of depth. John Fiala is the only viable option if Holmes or Kirkland get injured, and he's a free agent. Expect the team to add some depth with a mid-round pick of someone such as Oregon's Matt Smith or Western Illinois' Edgerton Hartwell.

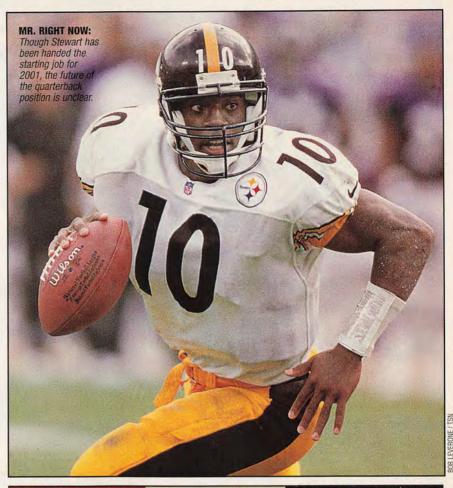
RB: On paper, it looks as if the Steelers have a logiam at this position, but free agency and salary-cap issues could deplete the group in a hurry. Assuming that Jerome Bettis is resigned, Pittsburgh could use a late-round pick on a third-down back to replace Amos Zereoue, a move that makes sense financially. The Steelers have Richard Huntley to take some carries off the aging Bettis but could use an explosive receiving/kick-returning back. Some good candidates are UMass' Marcel Shipp or Florida's Bo Carroll.

THE OUTLOOK

The Steelers seem to get more quality out of their picks than most teams, except at the receiver position. Neither Edwards nor Burress finished the year as a starter last season. Because of their lack of production, do not be surprised if Pittsburgh drafts another receiver, this time with a third- or fourthround pick. The team also will look to add a center, if not for this year, then for subsequent seasons. There also is a slim chance Pittsburgh will use its first-round pick, No. 16, to draft a quarterback, but only if Brees still is available. Stewart made strides, but he is not the long-term answer.

The Steelers need to bulk up at defensive end and add depth to an aging and tiring inside linebacker corps. Playing a 3-4 scheme puts a lot of demands on both positions to hold up physically, and the front seven clearly wore down in the final few games.

Finally, the Steelers have many issues to work out at running back, but expect those to be dealt with during free agency rather than the draft. Do not, however, be surprised if the team uses a late-round draft pick to add a playmaking threat at this spot, because Zereoue is replaceable. -The War Room



RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT 1. Plaxico Burress, WR

Rookie season was a bust. Will get another chance to start.

2. Marvel Smith, T

Started nine games and may have found a home at RT.

3a. Kendrick Clancy, DT

Backup NT right now, but coaches love his potential.

3b. Hank Poteat, CB

Was playmaker as return man but didn't do much as CB.

4. Danny Farmer, WR Played well for Bengals late in

season after Steelers cut him. 5a. Clark Haggans, OLB Needs to do more as a pass rusher, but team likes upside. 5b. Tee Martin, QB

Former college star may never be more than reserve in NFL.

6a. Chris Combs. DL Made team but didn't do much.

Will compete for backup DE job 6b. Jason Gavadza, TE Went from team to team, Wound

up on Packers' practice squad.

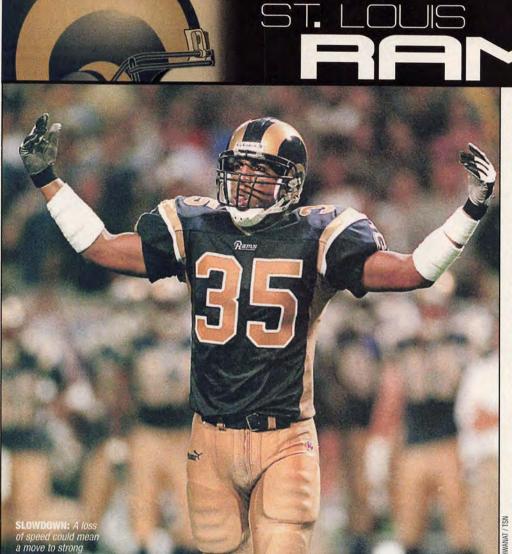
FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The early '90s were nice to this team, as strong drafts allowed it to reload when key starters left in free agency. The past five years have not been as kind. The club has failed to surround RB Jerome Bettis with quality skill players, even though first-round picks in '99 and 2000 were spent on receivers.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	9	8	10	11	9
Starters	1	1	2	2	1
Backups	1	2	4	5	6
Other team	3	1	0	1	2
Out of NFL	4	4	4	3	0

STEELERS WAR ROOM

The team's new front office has a year under its belt, with well-respected Kevin Colbert in charge of football operations. He replaced Tom Donahoe, who left to run the Bills. Pittsburgh is a simple organization in terms of front-office structure, and it is really a two-man show when it comes to decision-making. Coach Bill Cowher has significant power in all personnel decisions, and he and Colbert appear to be working well together to revitalize this roster. There is not a lot of flash in the front office, but the scouting department and coaching staff all work very closely together and seem to do a thorough job without taking a lot of chances. The Steelers always will be an organization that does not believe in overspending in free agency. As a result, it is very difficult for them to keep their veteran players. All one has to do is look at how many NFL rosters have been upgraded by Steelers free agents to know how well the team drafts and how much it struggles to keep its players. Because of the team's philosophy in free agency, the Steelers rely heavily on the draft, and they take particular pride in building through middleand late-round picks.



OFFENSE DEFENSE OB Kurt Warner LF Kevin Carter Trent Green Sean Moran FB Robert Holcombe Jeff Zgonina* James Hodgins **Brian Young** RB Marshall Faulk Gaylon Hyder Justin Watson Jeff Marriott WR Isaac Bruce Grant Wistrom Ricky Proehl Leonard Little WR Torry Holt LLB Lorenzo Styles* Az-Zahir Hakim **Dustin Cohen** TE Roland Williams MLB London Fletcher ■ Emie Conwell Lorenzo Styles* LT Orlando Pace **Todd Collins** John St. Clair Lorenzo Styles* LG Tom Nutten Todd Lyght* Pete Swanson Dre' Bly C Andy McCollum Devin Bush Mike Newell Rich Coady RG Adam Timmerman FS Keith Lyle

Can play for any team Solid player

*Unrestricted free agent.

Shevin Smith

Dexter McCleon

John Baker

Jacoby Shepherd

PROJECTED DEPTH CHAR

TEAM NEEDS

DT: After cutting Ray Agnew and D'Marco Farr, two prominent players at this position in recent seasons, the Rams have a huge void on the interior of the line. Agnew had a great season in '99 but was only ordinary in 2000. Farr's chronic knee problems limited him to a situational role when he could play last year, and he appeared on the downside of his career anyhow. Reserve Jeff Zgonina struggled in Farr's absence. The Rams need to add at least one every-down tackle in this draft who can stop the run. It would make sense for them to use a first-round pick and perhaps a second-round pick as well on tackles, especially since this is a deep draft for that position. Players such as Shaun Rogers of Texas, Damione Lewis of Miami and Marcus Stroud of Georgia could be available at the Rams' first-round spot.

OLB: Todd Collins will be 31 in May, and he wasn't playing well at the end of last season. He appeared to play stiff, and his inability to move hurt in coverage. The Rams need more speed on the edges, and this is the place to start. Leonard Little's move to end also is a reason to acquire an outside

linebacker. With Little out of the mix, St. Louis needs an athlete with speed and tenacity. The Rams' performance at this position was soft last season, and coach Mike Martz knows he needs some toughness here if his defense is to get active and shed the passive style that failed the team repeatedly. Clemson's Keith Adams, who plays hard and makes plays against the run and pass, would be a good fit. **CB:** The Rams need a tall,

rangy cornerback to replace Todd Lyght, who played poorly last season and is not expected back. Dexter McCleon and Dre' Bly, the probable starters, are small and not physical. And although Jacoby Shepherd, a 2000 second-round pick, has good size, he remains a project. Because the Rams lack experience at the position, they are more likely to sign a veteran free agent for immediate help than select a corner high in the draft. S: As the season unfolded, it

became increasingly apparent that St. Louis missed strong safety Billy Jenkins, who was traded to Denver last offseason. Devin Bush was often injured and was benched at midseason. His replacement, Rich Coady, was an average

player and hurt his neck late in the season. In addition, starting free safety Keith Lyle appears to have lost a step and could be switched to strong safety. The Rams need a safety capable of coming up to play the run and cover the tight end. The team's new defensive approach will ask a lot of its safeties, so a speedy guy with range could be drafted. Florida State's Derrick Gibson would give the Rams a boost.

P/K: The porous defense was maligned all season for giving up so many points. A close look shows punter John Baker also was at fault. He finished last year averaging barely 40 yards per attempt and was erratic. Baker's problems forced the defense to play on its heels, which caused it to lose its ability to attack and make plays. The Rams might give Baker another year to develop, but they could spend a pick on a guy such as California's Nick Harris. The team would like to re-sign kicker Jeff Wilkins, an unrestricted free agent, but he might be too expensive. If he leaves, the Rams probably would look for a veteran free agent.

ILB: London Fletcher, a restricted free agent, was unable to repeat his 1999 perfor-

RT

Cameron Spikes

Cameron Spikes

Fringe player

Ryan Tucker

Jeff Wilkins*

safety for Ly

mance last season. His backup, Lorenzo Styles, is an unrestricted free agent. The problems at defensive tackle only accentuate the need to draft a top middle linebacker. The Rams obviously need to re-sign at least one of the two veteran free agents, but the last thing new defensive coordinator Lovie Smith needs is a lack of depth in the middle behind unproven tackles. The Rams would do well to use a mid-round pick on a player such as North Carolina's Brandon Spoon or Oregon's Matt Smith.

THE OUTLOOK

The Rams have a slew of picks early in the draft, and Martz knows he needs them. The team does not have the money to test free agency, especially after the Rams put their franchise tag on defensive end Kevin Carter. Most of the team's defensive problems must be addressed through the draft.

Martz and Smith probably will push the team to draft a defensive tackle first. Outside linebacker and safety also need to be addressed. Last season, average play at those positions probably cost the Rams a couple of games and former defensive coordinator Peter Giunta his job. The performance at safety also must improve. Smith brings with him from Tampa a cover-2 scheme that requires the strong safety to cover a lot of ground. Cornerback and inside linebacker are other positions the team will try to improve. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Trung Canidate, RB Showed little in injury-riddled season. Needs to produce early.

2. Jacoby Shepherd, CB

Played in 14 games. Expected to provide depth next season.

3. John St. Clair, OL

On roster, but inactive for entire season. His versatility is a plus.

4. Kaulana Noa, OL

Was impressive in camp until injury put him on IR for season. 5. Brian Young, DL

Sporadic contributor, Looks to be a reserve defensive lineman.

6. Matt Bowen, S

Started two games because of injuries but should be a backup 7. Andrew Kline, G

On IR entire year. Could battle for reserve guard spot in '01.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

Last year's firstround pick, RB Trung Canidate, has been a huge disappointment. And although you can't knock the masterful job done by general manager Charley Armey in the free-agent market, it's easy to see the Rams haven't drafted

well in recent years.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	10	6	8	7	7
Starters	0	3	3	1	0
Backups	1	1	2	4	7
Other team	5	0	0	1	0
Out of NFL	4	2	3	1	0

RAMS WAR ROOM

Although the Rams are in the midst of a difficult offseason because of their playoff failure, this is still a solid front office and an organization with few major changes on the horizon. General manager Charley Armey runs every facet of the front office and has a solid scouting department that knows what kind of player he likes. He also seems to be on the same page with coach Mike Martz in the types of players Martz likes for his high-powered offense. This offseason, the Rams will devote most of their attention to defense. The unit underachieved in a big way in 2000, and with a lot of defensive coaching changes and personnel moves, the Rams want to change the face of this group. As always, St. Louis will put a premium on speed and athleticism, and it should continue to be a great matchup team, especially on offense. President John Shaw does not interfere in the front office and gives his coaches and scouts every opportunity to succeed. Because of the turnover on the coaching staff, look for this offseason to be dominated by Armey and the front office, with coaches having only moderate input in decisions. The Rams will not be afraid to make some dramatic moves, and with a very talented roster, they have the ammunition to do so.



TEAM NEEDS

RB: Jermaine Fazande is a big back, but he doesn't use his size (6-2, 255) to his advantage. Terrell Fletcher isn't suited for everydown duty. Each player has had his opportunity as a starter, and neither has established himself as a go-to guy. The offense finished the 2000 season near the bottom of nearly every statistical rushing category, so the addition of a top-flight back would at least help make the team competitive. There are plenty of good runners available in free agency, which would be a smart avenue to pursue for a team in need of instant credibility. If the Chargers draft Virginia Tech quarterback Michael Vick with the top overall pick, they could use a second-round pick on a running back such as Maryland's LaMont Jordan or Tennessee's Travis Henry.

CB: A year ago, when this position was the Chargers' top need, the team signed DeRon Jenkins away from Baltimore. Jenkins was a significant disappointment as nagging injuries limited his play. Fakhir Brown also was hurt

for stretches last season. The team doesn't have much else to work with. If Jenkins can stay healthy, the Chargers aren't far from fielding a respectable secondary. If he can't, the team again will be in serious trouble when opponents force it into playing nickel and dime defenses. A couple of athletic cornerback prospects who might interest the Chargers in the later rounds are Georgia's Jamie Henderson and Vanderbilt's Jimmy

DE: The loss of Raylee Johnson to a knee injury in training camp left the team without a capable pass rusher, and the defense felt the effects of that void all season. Johnson is expected back at full strength next season, but more help is needed-especially because Al Fontenot and Darren Mickell, last year's starters, both are free agents. This unit is short on talent and depth, so don't be surprised if it undergoes an overhaul before camp starts in July. In the draft, the Chargers will target a group that includes Oregon State's DeLawrence Grant and Florida State's Roland Seymour in the second or third round.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART **OFFENSE** DEFENSE QB Moses Moreno Al Fontenot* Jim Harbaugh Mike Prigley FB Fred McCrary Jamal Williams Robert Chancey Darren Mickell* John Parrella RB Terrell Fletcher Antoine Simpson Jermaine Fazande Raylee Johnson WR Curtis Conway Reggie Jones Darren Mickell* OLB Junior Seau Jeff Graham Shannon Taylor Trevor Gaylor TE/HB Freddie Jones MLB Orlando Ruff Steve Heiden Steve Tovar* Ben Coleman* **OLB** Gerald Dixon Damion McIntosh Shannon Taylor Fakhir Brown Raleigh Roundtree* DeMingo Graham Davis Sanchez C Roman Fortin Rodney Harrison Kendyl Jacox Armon Hatcher RG Kendyl Jacox FS Rogers Beckett DeMingo Graham Armon Hatcher Vaughn Parker DeRon Jenkins ■ Raleigh Roundtree* Darryll Lewis

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

John Carney*

Darren Bennett

QB: Coach Mike Riley apparently was done trying to coax some maturity out of malcontent Ryan Leaf. The Chargers released their former first-round pick (1998) after three disappointing seasons despite impressive physical skills. Moses Moreno can't stay healthy enough to make it through four quarters, let alone an entire season. The Chargers must decide if it's worth having such a fragile guy on the roster. It's doubtful unrestricted free agent Jim Harbaugh will return, so it's a safe bet the team will bring in another experienced veteran to help tutor Vick—if he is taken with the No. 1 pick.

OT: Having a couple of big, heavy-footed maulers on your offensive line works well at times, but this unit has far too many. The team desperately needs an influx of quickness here in order to do more offensively. Finding a solid left tackle should be a top priority. Ben Coleman played there last season, but he is a much better fit at guard. Look for the Chargers to wait until the later rounds to uncover a gem. West Virginia's Matt Wilson, Hawaii's Kynan Forney and Alabama A&M's Kendrick Rogers are possibilities.

LB: Though still among the game's elite at the position, Junior Seau is in the twilight of his career. There's really no one else exciting at linebacker on the roster. Gerald Dixon and Orlando Ruff, who both started alongside Seau last season, are average players and easily could be replaced. Look for the Chargers to try and improve the overall speed of this unit. Some possible draft candidates to push Dixon and Ruff are Texas A&M outside linebacker Jason Glenn and Oklahoma middle linebacker Torrance Marshall.

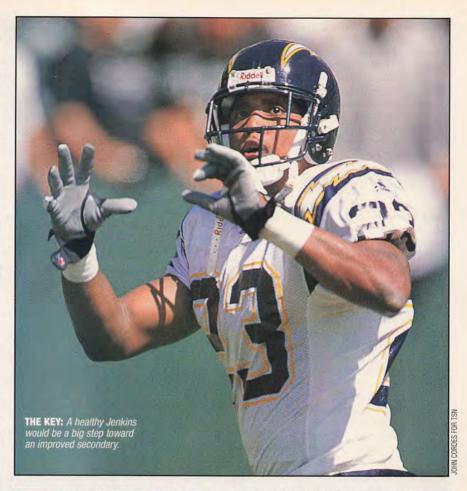
THE OUTLOOK

While Chargers fans suffer through one painful regular season after another, the saving grace continues to be draft day. And this year, the Chargers' fortunes rest with new general manager John Butler, a respected personnel man. Many expect the Chargers to take Vick with the draft's first pick, but don't discount the possibility of a trade to accumulate more picks—especially if the team can secure a veteran quarterback such as Trent Green or Brad Johnson.

Regardless, this is a team in desperate need of help across the board, and Butler might opt to address the quarterback position in free agency. The Ravens proved last season that a team can still win without an outstanding quarterback. Such an example could prompt Butler to focus on the team's talent-starved defense.

This team has five quality defensive players—Seau, defensive tackle John Parrella, safety Rodney Harrison, Johnson and Jenkins—which leaves six positions in need of an upgrade. Last year's top pick, safety Rogers Beckett, could factor into that group, but 'hasn't shown enough to prove he's the real deal.

For all the problems the Chargers have on offense, it would be a surprise if Butler didn't take a defensive-minded approach into the draft. — The War Room



RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

2. Rogers Beckett, DB
Played quite a bit in 2000, and
his role promises to expand.
3. Damion McIntosh, OT
Needs a lot of reps to seriously
push for starting job in 2001.
4a. Trevor Gaylor, WR
Very inconsistent as a rookie,
but staff still likes his upside.

4b. Leonardo Carson, DLWas projected to play end, but
Chargers like him better inside.

6a. Shannon Taylor, LBSpeedy outside prospect has a great mentor in Junior Seau.

Ragers Beckett

Gb. Damen Wheeler, DB

Was cut before the season, signed by Lions, then cut again **6c. JaJuan Seider, QB**Failed to win a roster spot behind NFL's most dismal trio. **7. Jason Thomas, G**Small-school product. Spent season on practice squad.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The team has made some incomprehensible moves involving picks recently, and that maneuvering has yielded little of value.

Malcontent QB Ryan Leaf tops the list of failures. TE Freddie Jones is the only impact player of the past five drafts. New G.M. John Butler is exactly what this team needs.

Ì	Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000	
	Total picks	8	8	6	7	8	
	Starters	0	2	0	2	0	
Ì	Backups	0	1	0	3	6	
	Other team	1	2	1	1	0	
	Out of NFL	7	3	5	1	2	

CHARGERS WAR ROOM

The Chargers revamped their front office this offseason, hiring John Butler as general manager. Butler, a scout for the Chargers in the 1980s but who built his reputation in an outstanding stint as a G.M. in Buffalo, brings a wealth of knowledge and organization to the Chargers. He brought with him from Buffalo trusted aide A.J. Smith, who will run the pro personnel department. Coach Mike Riley and his staff will have adequate input into draft planning, but final personnel decisions likely will be Butler's. His organizational philosophy through the years has been to be thorough and organized without taking a lot of chances. This is a front office that will be fundamentally sound, will not likely make a lot of moves on draft day and will do an especially good job finding players in the middle to late rounds. However, Butler & Co. face a huge challenge in their first year: They must decide whether to retain the first overall pick and draft Virginia Tech quarterback Michael Vick or sign a veteran free-agent quarterback and trade away the No. 1 pick to obtain extra picks. It would be Butler's style to stay where he is and pick the best available player, but this might be a unique situation. It will be interesting to see how it plays out.

TEAM NEEDS

ILB: The 49ers could not count on Ken Norton Jr. and Winfred Tubbs any longer. Norton was released by the team and the same was expected to happen to Tubbs. Both have great skills and showed durability in 2000, but their contract numbers made them obvious targets as the 49ers tried to get under the salary cap. A young stalwart in the middle of the defense would make it stronger against the run. Last season, coaches were impressed with Jeff Ulbrich, but the rookie finished last

year on injured reserve. The 49ers would be well-served to obtain a feisty run-stopper. Southern California's Zeke Moreno plays the run well and can cover running backs in pass routes. Moreno's speed and strength would complement the playmaking ability of Julian Peterson on the outside. Moreno is a local product, and Bill Walsh leans toward West Coast guys. Moreno might not have great strength, but has quickness and savvy that sparks comparisons to Rams linebacker London Fletcher. DE: John Engelberger did a fine job last season against the run. But the 49ers need

> more of a presence off the edge. Anthony Pleasant wasn't very effective rushing the passer on the right side and had only one sack last season. Opposing quarterbacks had all day to take advantage of the team's young secondary because of the lack of a pass rush. If help isn't brought in, the 49ers could suffer the same fate this season. Coach Steve Mariucci has talent on the defensive front, but it lacks

the type of player opposing coaches worry about when devising a game plan. Coordinator Jim Mora Jr. could use a player such as California's Andre Carter. His quick first step off the snap enables him to get after quarterbacks, and his cat-like quickness would help the line greatly.

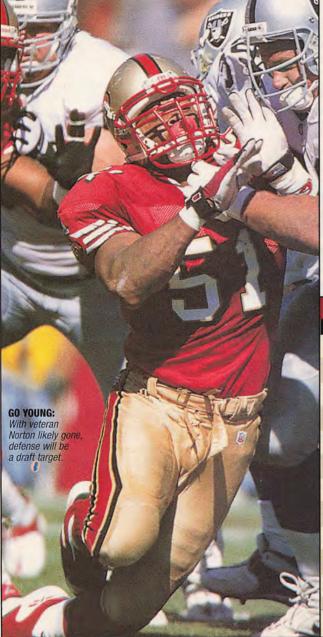
TE: Greg Clark cannot be counted on to stay healthy. What's worse is that behind him, Justin Swift and Brian Jennings are not capable of taking on a starting role. San Francisco needs to find someone who can be counted on to run-block and catch passes, but more important, it needs durability. Jeff Garcia is the type of quarterback who has success throwing underneath, particularly on the move. The 49ers would be making the right choice if they found a way to obtain surehanded Jabari Holloway of Notre Dame.

C: Chris Dalman's neck injury is more serious than the team is letting on. And if Dalman can't go in the fall, Jeremy Newberry, a natural guard, again would be forced to play out of position at center. Although the line has played well recently, age is starting to creep up on this unit. Look for time to take its toll if the line does not get an immediate infusion of youth. Mariucci and his staff have been far too reliant on patchwork protection up front, featuring a ton of guys playing out of position. The 49ers need a true center, and Minnesota's Ben Hamilton could be the answer.

DT: San Francisco finished 2000 allowing over 110 yards rushing per game, way too much. Most of the team's problems against

the run came on the interior, where age and injury led to soft play. The 49ers need an active guy such as Miami's Damione Lewis. He is a one-gap player, but his burst off the snap enables him to snuff out runs before they develop.

G: Ray Brown is coming off perhaps his finest season. But it also was his 15th year. With the veteran's departure around the corner, the 49ers will look to upgrade here. San Francisco is in need of depth and youth, and it could get both in Arizona State's Victor Leyva.



	PROJECTED D	DEPTH	CHART
	OFFENSE	The second second	DEFENSE
QB	Jeff Garcia		John Engelberger
	Rick Mirer*		Chike Okeafor
FB	Fred Beasley	LT .	Bryant Young
	Terry Jackson		Cedric Killings
RB	Charlie Garner*	RT .	Brentson Buckner*
	Travis Jervey		Reggie McGrew
WR	Terrell Owens	RE .	Junior Bryant
	Tai Streets		Anthony Pleasant*
WR	Jerry Rice	LOLB	Julian Peterson
	J.J. Stokes		Jeff Posey
TE	Greg Clark	LILB	Artie Ulmer
	Justin Swift		None
LT	Derrick Deese	RILB	Jeff Ulbrich
	Matt Willig		None
LG	Ray Brown	LC	Ahmed Plummer
1	Phil Ostrowski		Anthony Parker
C	Jeremy Newberry	SS I	Lance Schulters
	Ben Lynch		John Keith
RG	Dave Fiore	FS .	Zack Bronson*
	Phil Ostrowski		Monty Montgomery*
RT	■ Scott Gragg*	RC .	Jason Webster
	Dan Dercher		Monty Montgomery*
K	■ Wade Richey	P	Chad Stanley
	Can play for any t		

THE OUTLOOK

Last year, the 49ers trimmed pricey fat off their roster prior to the draft and began to build for the future. After several seasons of plugging the dam, Walsh and director of player personnel Terry Donahue chose to restructure an organization that was coming down from a euphoric high of five titles over 20 years. The team's defense received most of the attention last April, and it likely will be the priority again this year.

Bet on the 49ers' linebackers getting some help early in the draft as veterans Norton and Tubbs are not expected to be back. Defensive end is another area that certainly will get a boost. The 49ers need to improve a pass rush that was near the bottom of the league in total sacks last fall.

On the other side of the ball, expect the 49ers to try to improve things at tight end. Current starter Clark is injury prone, and there is little depth behind him. The 49ers also will try to get better in the offensive line as Dalman is recovering from a neck injury that ended his 2000 season and Brown will be entering his 16th year.

One last thing to keep in mind heading into the draft is that the 49ers are well aware of their overall weaknesses, so trading their first overall selection for a bunch of later picks is not out of the question. -The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1a. Julian Peterson, LB Had excellent first year, but missed some time with injuries.

1b. Ahmed Plummer, CB

Thrown into the fire as rookie. Should be much better in 2001.

2a. John Engelberger, DE

Became a starter early in year and didn't give up the job.

2b. Jason Webster, CB Nailed down starting job with solid play in second half of year.

3a. Giovanni Carmazzi, QB Seemed lost at times. Future hinges on mental development. 3b. Jeff Ulbrich, LB

Has a chance to earn starting iob in middle this season.

4. John Keith, DB

Had terrific rookie season. Expected to start at S in 2001.

5a. Paul Smith, RB

Will be counted on to add depth to backfield.

5b. John Milem, DE

Raw talent figures to fill backup role in 2001.

7a. Tim Rattay, QB

No. 3 QB should keep jobunless Carmazzi comes on. 7b. Brian Jennings, TE

Earned his keep as a long snapper last season.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The team did quite a turnaround last April after a series of drafts

in which plugging the dam was far more important than building for the future. Years of illogical thinking can't be erased with one good class, but it does appear the 49ers' front office is finally on the same page again.

'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
7	3	7	8	11
1	1	3	1	2
2	0	1	6	9
0	1	2	1	0
4	1	1	0	0
	7 1 2 0	7 3 1 1 2 0 0 1	7 3 7 1 1 3 2 0 1 0 1 2	7 3 7 8 1 1 3 1 2 0 1 6 0 1 2 1

49ERS WAR ROOM

The 49ers are finally starting to put their salary-cap problems behind them. They might even be able to participate in free agency this year. They have had to rely on the past couple of drafts for success, and though they have a lot of promising young players, they still have a long way to go. There are rumors that general manager Bill Walsh will retire, or at least take a back seat, after the draft and that the front office will be handed over to Terry Donahue, who has been groomed the past couple of years to run the organization. Donahue is bright, has been trained by the best and should be able to step in at the appropriate time. Coach Steve Mariucci, who appears to enjoy getting involved in personnel matters, has a big role in personnel and will be involved, along with Walsh and Donahue, on all acquisitions. The 49ers have a very solid veteran scouting staff, led by Jim Gruden, who organizes the draft, but the team's scouts are basically information gatherers who have a voice but are not involved in final decisions—in free agency or the draft. Overall, it appears the organization is starting to get some of its stability back and that the future is finally starting to look better.



TEAM NEEDS

QB: Coach Mike Holmgren will not go through another season with the same instability at quarterback that hampered his team in 2000. Jon Kitna would have been wise to accept the lucrative contract extension the team offered him last offseason, but Holmgren is now glad Kitna didn't. Kitna has proven he is nothing more than a backup and was expected to move on in free agency. Holmgren was willing to give Brock Huard an extended audition last season to see if the second-year player had the toughness to lead his team, but Huard spent most of that time in the trainer's room. Look for the Seahawks to acquire a veteran early via trade or free agency. Rumored possibilities include Trent Green (Rams) and Matt Hasselbeck (Packers), either of whom would be a huge upgrade for Holmgren. The emergency quarterback role also was unsettled last season, so look for the Seahawks to mull over taking a

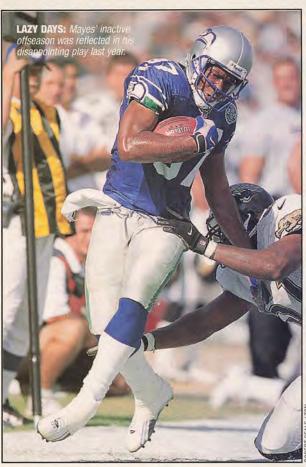
player such as Nebraska-Kearney's Justin Coleman or Arkansas State's Cleo Lemon late on Day 2 if they don't draft Purdue's Drew Brees in the first round.

DT: This defense was soft all last season, and it started up front. Eight-time Pro Bowl tackle Cortez Kennedy was in danger of being released for cap purposes, and fellow starter Riddick Parker might be allowed to leave after a disappointing season as the replacement for Sam Adams. There are some young reserve players on the roster, but none is a serious contender to start. This position promises to have a completely different look next season. Barring a predraft trade, look for the Seahawks to use one of their two top-10 picks on either Georgia's Richard Seymour or Florida's Gerard Warren.

WR: The team landed a third-round gem in Darrell Jackson last year. Jackson led rookie receivers in several statistical categories, and Holmgren is high on his playmaking ability. Derrick Mayes loafed the entire offseason a year ago, and his lack of

	PROJECTED I		
	OFFENSE		DEFENSE
QB	Brock Huard	LE I	Michael Sinclair
	Travis Brown		Matt LaBounty
FB	Mack Strong	LT	Riddick Parker*
	Reggie Brown		Antonio Cochran
RB	Ricky Watters	RT	Cortez Kennedy
	Shaun Alexander		Antonio Cochran
WR	■ Sean Dawkins*	RE I	Lamar King
	Karsten Bailey		Matt LaBounty
WR	Derrick Mayes	OLB I	Anthony Simmons
	■ Darrell Jackson		Marcus Bell
TE	Christian Fauria	MLB	George Koonce*
	Itula Mili		Isaiah Kacyvenski
LT	Walter Jones	ROLB .	Chad Brown
	Chad Overhouser		James Logan*
LG	Pete Kendall*	LC	Shawn Springs
	Frank Beede		Ike Charlton
C	Chris Gray	SS	Kerry Joseph*
	■ Robbie Tobeck		Reggie Tongue
RG	Floyd Wedderburn	FS I	Jay Bellamy*
	Frank Beede		Maurice Kelly
RT	Chris McIntosh	RC	Willie Williams
	Todd Weiner		Fred Vinson
K	Rian Lindell	P	Jeff Feagles

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.



work ethic showed up on the field. Mayes came on late in the season, but Holmgren must insist on him being in better condition. Mayes still might be a June 1 cap casualty. The team was ready to move on without Sean Dawkins last season until it got him at a cheap price on the heels of training camp. Dawkins was the team's most reliable target, but he is unlikely to be around for another year. With Michigan's David Terrell likely to be gone before the Seahawks pick, look for them to nab NC State's Koren Robinson, Oregon State's Chad Johnson or Kansas State's Quincy Morgan with one of their firstround picks.

ILB: DeShone Myles, who missed all of last season, has not proven he can stay healthy, and insurance policy George Koonce fought hard but didn't hold up well in the middle. Koonce's days in Seattle are likely over, but Myles will return to compete with Isaiah Kacyvenski, who saw the majority of his playing time on special teams as a rookie last year. The team might move Myles outside if it lands a rugged middle linebacker such as Western Illinois' Edgerton Hartwell or Texas A&M's Cornelius Anthony in the third or fourth

CB: This unit gave up far too many big plays last season. Former Pro Bowl player Shawn Springs took a step backward and veteran Willie Williams was a frequent target. The team traded running back Ahman Green to Green Bay for Fred Vinson before last year's draft and the young cornerback spent the season on injured reserve. Ike Charlton, a second-round draft pick last year, is another young player who needs to come through for the Seahawks. There is sentiment in the organization that Charlton might be better off at safety. Although they won't take one early, look for the Seahawks to consider fast but raw cornerbacks such as Tennessee State's Ligarius Jennings or Akron's Dwight Smith in the middle rounds. G: If the team loses Pete Kendall in free agency, as expected, it will move center Chris Gray to guard and insert Robbie Tobeck in Gray's spot. That plan should work well, but it would leave no depth on the interior line. The team's scouts, who basically are holdovers from Holmgren's days in Green Bay, have had great success locating tough guys at guard in the later rounds. Some players who might interest them include Illinois' Ray Redziniak and Wisconsin's Dave Costa.

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1a. Shaun Alexander, RB Will become team's workhorse once Watters is moved.

1b. Chris McIntosh, OT Better than highly regarded bookend Jones in last 3 games.

2. Ike Charlton, DB

Team must decide whether he's a cornerback or safety.

3. Darrell Jackson, WR

A third-round steal, he emerged as team's best receiver.

4a. Marcus Bell, LB

Made most of late-season audition. Could play in nickel in '01.



good special teams player. 6a. James Williams, WR Has good speed. Could be a situational receiver next year. 6b. Tim Watson, DT Small-school guy won roster spot but never got into game. 6c. John Hilliard, DL College DT who moved outside. Fits best on special teams.

Might be nothing more than a

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

Seattle has done a sound job with its top picks, but little has come from Day 2 of the draft. Except for WR Joey Galloway (now with Dallas), the team has had trouble identifying talent at the skill positions. RB Shaun Alexander, one of last year's first-round picks, could be a sign of good things.

Year	'96	'97	198	'99	2000
Total picks	9	5	7	7	9
Starters	1	2	1	3	2
Backups	1	1	2	3	7
Other team	2	0	2	0	0
Out of NFL	5	2	2	1	0

SEAHAWKS WAR ROOM

Coach Mike Holmgren has surrounded himself with trusted aides, but he is still in charge of this organization. Ted Thompson, vice president of football operations, oversees all facets of personnel. John Schneider oversees both the college and pro scouting, and Scott McCloughan will manage the draft. Each of them knows what Holmgren wants in free agency and the draft. Although it is an organization with one voice, everyone is on the same page. The Seahawks will not be outworked in free agency or the draft; their front office is thorough and will research every avenue in the pursuit of players. With two first-round picks, look for Seattle to be involved in every scenario in free agency and the draft involving high-profile quarterbacks. Holmgren will not stand pat. He will attack the draft and free agency to upgrade this roster. Although handling the dual role of coach and general manager is difficult, one advantage Holmgren has is that he can make every final decision and doesn't really have to answer to anybody. The coaches will be moderately involved in personnel decisions, as Holmgren trusts those who have been around him the longest. But they will not make any final decisions.

THE OUTLOOK

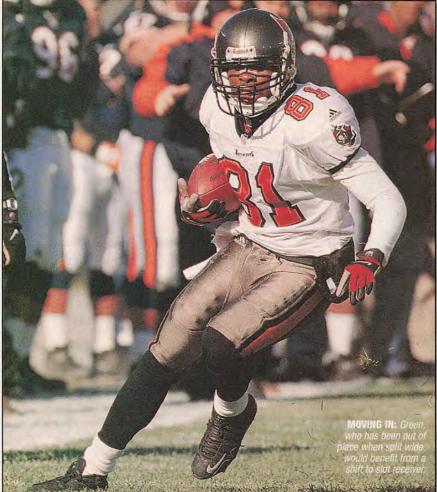
After winning the AFC West in 1999, Holmgren's first season in Seattle, the Seahawks finished far out of playoff contention last year. Holmgren's housecleaning, which began before his first season, should come to an end sometime before training camp. There are plenty of needs to address, but the team likes the building blocks it has: running back Shaun Alexander, tackles Walter Jones and Chris McIntosh, and Jackson on offense, and Springs, linebacker Anthony Simmons and defensive end Lamar King on defense.

Aside from the Chargers, who have the top overall pick, the Seahawks pretty much hold the cards when it comes to trades in the early part of the first round. With the seventh and 10th picks, they could go in a number of directions, including trading one of those picks for a veteran quarterback. However, it is more likely that they will stay put and address the wide receiver and defensive tackle positions.

The inability to stretch the field on offense and stop the run on defense were the main reasons behind the team's drop

Finding an impact receiver will not be difficult, but Holmgren might have a hard time locating the dominant defensive tackle

BUCCANEERS



TEAM NEEDS

OT: The team rotated players all season at left tackle, and Jerry Wunsch, an unrestricted free agent, could be lost from the right side. Opponents got the majority of their pressure off the edges, and that forced quarterback Shaun King to improvise more than the coaches would have liked. Pete Pierson and George Hegamin are stopgap solutions at best, which makes this the biggest need on a team with few weaknesses. If they choose to go this direction in the first round, the Bucs could come away with Florida's Kenyatta Walker or Michigan's Jeff Backus.

TE: The team probably could get by with Dave Moore as the starter, even though he has proved unreliable. The Buccaneers need to find a tight end who consistently gets open and hangs on to the ball, two things Moore did not do last season. Ideally, the Bucs would be able to slide everybody down one slot on the depth chart, with Moore moving to a backup role and Patrick Hape holding on as the third-stringer. Using fullback Mike Alstott at tight end is one idea the team is considering. There aren't many top tight-end prospects, but ones

who could unseat Moore are Arizona's State's Todd Heap and North Carolina's Alge Crumpler.

WR: The staff must make some scheme changes to get the receivers more involved in the offense, but an overall upgrade in talent also is needed. Keyshawn Johnson, who came on late in the season, must have a bigger impact from the start of training camp. Johnson did a lot of talking and not enough producing in his first year with the team, and his improved play would substantially upgrade the offense. Jacquez Green, a perfect slot receiver, is miscast on the outside. Both player and team would benefit if Green had more of an Az Hakim-type role. The team's patience with Reidel Anthony is wearing thin, so look for it to go after a polished receiver. Fortunately, the Bucs can wait until the third round. Some possibilities include Florida State's Marvin Minnis and Texas A&M's Robert Ferguson

QB: The mix of King, Eric Zeier and Joe Hamilton is average. If King were to go down, Zeier would be a decent short-term answer, but the Bucs should look to add a guy who can keep the team competitive longer. Tennessee's Neil O'Donnell would have been a perfect fit a year ago, but the team couldn't sign him. If the Bucs don't sign someone early in free agency, look for coach Tony Dungy to grab another quarterback in the late rounds, as he did a year ago with Hamilton. Arkansas State's Cleo Lemon and Arizona's Ortege Jenkins are two players who intrigue the Bucs.

CB: Few teams would be able to withstand the loss of a player such as Ronde Barber, but Tampa Bay is one of them. Barber, an unrestricted free agent, wanted to stay put and the team wanted to keep him, but he could be forced elsewhere by economics. In that scenario, Brian Kelly would step into the starting lineup and probably play well, but it is doubtful he would have the impact Barber has had the last two years. If Barber leaves, depth will be a primary concern, because Floyd Young would be the only other established corner on the roster. A couple players who are good fits for the team's zone-heavy defense are Vanderbilt's Jimmy Williams and Southern California's Antuan Simmons.

RB: Although this is somewhat of a reach on a team with few glaring needs, the Bucs do not have a proven, shifty, change-of-pace runner behind Warrick Dunn. If they were to lose Dunn for a prolonged period, the Bucs would re-insert Alstott at halfback, but that still would leave a void on third downs and obvious passing situations. Rabih Abdullah has been respectable in brief mop-up duty, and Aaron Stecker starred in NFL Europe, but neither is proven over the long haul. The team likely could get a quality situational back such as Syracuse's Dee Brown or Northwestern State's Tony Taylor in the fifth or sixth round.

Charles Kirby James Cannida RB DT Warrick Dunn Warren Sapp Rabih Abdullah Tyoka Jackson* WR Jacquez Green Marcus Jones Karl Williams Steve White Keyshawn Johnson SLB Shelton Quarles Reidel Anthony Jeff Gooch TE Dave Moore MLB Jamie Duncan Patrick Hape* Nate Webster LT Pete Pierson WLB Derrick Brooks George Hegamin Jeff Gooch LG LC Donnie Abraham Randall McDaniel Cosey Coleman Floyd Young* C Jeff Christy John Lynch Todd Washington Damien Robinson* RG Frank Middleton* Damien Robinson*

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent.

DEFENSE

Marcus Jones

Dexter Jackson

Ronde Barber

Brian Kelly

Mark Royals

Anthony McFarland

Cosey Coleman

DeMarcus Curry

Martin Gramatica

Jerry Wunsch*

OFFENSE

Shaun King

Eric Zeier

Mike Alstott

FB

RT

THE OUTLOOK

Unlike the majority of wild-card teams, which still have plenty of needs, the Bucs already have one of the most talented rosters in the league. In order to overcome some of their own inconsistencies and challenge for supremacy in the NFC Central, the Bucs must focus on upgrading at offensive tackle and tight end. Quarterback could be included in that group, but Dungy appears steadfast in his support of King.

The offensive line got a boost last year when the team signed Pro Bowl players Jeff Christy and Randall McDaniel, but more work needs to be done on the perimeter. The Bucs have avoided obvious needs at both tackle positions the past few years, and the possible loss of Wunsch would make this a no-brainer first-round pick.

It appears the staff is convinced Alstott could provide relief at tight end. But though he might add another dimension in a passcatching H-back role, he is not the answer. Moore would make an excellent backup, but he hurt the team more than he helped it as the starter. Most teams like to wait until the later rounds to select tight ends, so the Bucs could get one in the early rounds who would help significantly.

On defense, the line and linebacker corps are in great shape. The only additions needed are in the secondary, and those players are needed only for depth. - The War Room

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

2. Cosey Coleman, G

To open spot for Coleman, team likely will let FA Middleton go.

3. Nate Webster, LB

Team must decide if Webster or Jamie Duncan is its future MLB. 5. James Whalen, TE

Cut before the season started.

Wound up on Cowboys' roster.

6. David Gibson, DB

A physical safety who won't play much with Lynch around.

7. Joe Hamilton, QB

Will be given chance to compete against No. 2 QB Eric Zeier.



FIVE-YEAR TALLY

This could be the league's most underrated front office. Pro Bowl players up and down the roster, especially on the defensive side, have made the Buccaneers a perennial playoff contender. But the biggest deficiency on the club is at quarterback, and the Bucs have done little to address that issue.

2						
Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000	
Total picks	9	10	7	9	5	
Starters	3	4	2	2	0	
Backups	1	3	3	3	4	
Other team	2	1	1	1	1	
Out of NFL	3	2	1	3	0	

BUCCANEERS WAR ROOM

Although the Bucs might have underachieved on the field in 2000, they continue to have one of the best front offices in the league. Led by general manager Rich McKay, director of player personnel Jerry Angelo and coach Tony Dungy, this is an organized group without any big egos. It does not make a lot of mistakes and rarely misses on a top draft choice. The group puts a premium on speed and athleticism and, as a result, the Bucs are an excellent matchup team. They do an especially good job of not only knowing their own draft board but knowing how players are perceived throughout the league and what other teams' needs are. This allows them to have a handle on how players will come off draft boards and where they need to make their picks. Many teams pay little or no attention to this aspect of the draft, but the Bucs realize its importance, and it has helped them. The coaches have moderate input into personnel decisions, along with a very underrated scouting staff. Morale is high, though the final decisions come from the trio of Dungy, McKay and Angelo. Look for the Bucs to be fairly conservative, taking the best player available after departing from their philosophy last year in trading for Keyshawn Johnson.

TEAM NEEDS

G: This is clearly the Titans' biggest need this offseason. Bruce Matthews will return in 2001, but it will be his 19th season and he can't play forever. Also, right guard Benji Olson and backup Gennaro DiNapoli are restricted free agents who could get some interest. The Titans very well could use their first-round pick to draft a sure thing. Michigan's Steve Hutchinson and Washington's Chad Ward are two good possibilities.

CB: Tennessee received spectacular play from Samari Rolle (restricted free agent) and Denard Walker (unrestricted) last season and needs to pay up for their services. Rolle, who made his first Pro Bowl, is the cornerstone of the defense and could draw some offers from teams desperate for cover help. Walker was the defense's most improved player, and his size (6-1, 190) will make him a hot commodity. The team also could lose backup Michael Booker, who made strides late in the season in nickel and dime situa-

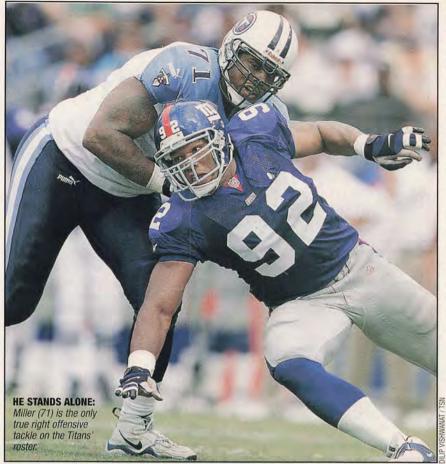
tions. Tennessee needs to address this position with one of its first two picks and could take Mississippi's Ken Lucas or Western Illinois' William Peterson.

WR: With several big-name receivers on the depth chart, it is hard to imagine that this is a need. But Carl Pickens was injured most of the season and didn't contribute much when he was healthy. Kevin Dyson and Yancey Thigpen continued to contribute less than expected. Luckily for the Titans, Derrick Mason and Chris Sanders played way above expectations. Pickens and Dyson might not return, and Mason was an unrestricted free agent hoping to cash in on his impressive season. The situation might leave Tennessee with no choice but to use a pick in the top three rounds on a receiver to play in its three- and four-receiver sets. Two good fits would be Wisconsin's Chris Chambers and Auburn's Ronney Daniels.

OT: The team lacks depth at tackle. Fred Miller doesn't have a solid backup on the right side, and Jason Mathews is the only guy likely to return on the left side to back

DECLECTED DEDTU CUADT

MCNair Donnell o Neal George y Thomas Dyson Banders ckens k Mason*	LE LT RT RE LLI	B	Jevon Kearse Henry Ford John Thornton Henry Ford Jason Fisk Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
Donnell o Neal ireen George y Thomas Dyson Ganders ckens k Mason*	LT RT RE LLI	B 	Henry Ford John Thomton Henry Ford Jason Fisk Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
o Neal George y Thomas Dyson Sanders ckens k Mason*	RT RE LLI	B 	John Thornton Henry Ford Jason Fisk Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
George y Thomas Dyson Ganders ckens k Mason*	RT RE LLI	B 	Henry Ford Jason Fisk Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
George y Thomas Dyson Ganders ckens k Mason*	RE	B 	Jason Fisk Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
y Thomas Dyson Sanders ckens k Mason* Nycheck	RE	B 	Joe Salave'a Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
Dyson Sanders ckens K Mason*	Ш	B 	Kenny Holmes* Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
Sanders ckens Mason* Wycheck	Ш	B 	Henry Ford Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
ckens Mason* Wycheck	-		Greg Favors Keith Bulluck
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Nycheck	MI		
Commence of the Commence of th	M		
	1415	В	Randall Godfrey
Kinney			Frank Chamberlin
opkins	RL	В	Eddie Robinson
Mathews			Peter Sirmon
Matthews	LC		Denard Walker*
iller			Michael Booker
_ong	SS		Blaine Bishop
Matthews			Perry Phenix
			Marcus Robertson
			Bobby Myers
liller	RC		Samari Rolle
			Dainon Sidney
			Craig Hentrich
	liller Mathews	ro DiNapoli Iiller RC Mathews	ro DiNapoli filler RC



RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1. Keith Bulluck, LB It's just a matter of time before he wins a starting job.

3a. Erron Kinney, TE

A quality prospect who was big contributor in two-TE sets.

3b. Byron Frisch, DE

Unimpressive as rookie. Needs good camp to make roster.

4a. Bobby Myers, S Won job as backup to FS

Marcus Robertson.

4b. Peter Sirmon, LB

Special teams contributor who also was a backup at OLB.

5a. Aric Morris, FS

Team likes his future, but he's a third-string SS right now. 5b. Frank Chamberlin, LB Pleasant surprise as a rookie. Will maintain backup MLB job.

6. Robaire Smith, DE Probably team's best value

pick. Part of DL rotation. 7a. Mike Green, RB

Was a reserve back and special teams player.

7b. Wes Shivers, G

Cut by Titans, given late-season shot by Falcons.

FIVE-YEAR TALLY

The Titans have built a perennial playoff team by consistently improving each year through the draft. None of the team's 2000 picks has become a starter, but nine of the 10 players made the roster, providing great depth and balance. In the previous four drafts, the team has found nine of its current starters.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	9	9	8	8	10
Starters	1	3	3	2	0
Backups	1	2	3	2	9
Other team	2	0	0	2	1
Out of NFL	5	4	2	2	0

TITANS WAR ROOM

Under the leadership of general manager Floyd Reese, Tennessee has put together one of the best rosters in the NFL, and the front office probably doesn't get the credit it deserves. Tennessee has a skilled and experienced scouting staff, but it suffered a major loss last summer when director of college scouting Glenn Cumbee died. The Titans have not replaced Cumbee, and his workload seems to have been picked up by director of player personnel Rich Snead and Reese. Don't be surprised if the Titans continue to run the organization the way it is being run now-lean but efficient. Tennessee has done a great job finding players at small schools and being successful in the middle and late rounds. The Titans always have put a premium on speed and athletic ability, and as a result, they are an outstanding matchup team. The Titans also seem to do an excellent job of analyzing their roster; they have a great handle on their personnel needs. The coaches work well with the scouts, and this organization does not appear to have a lot of big egos. Still, it might be one of the most underrated front offices in the NFL, as evidenced by a talent-laden roster that has pushed the team to elite status.

up Brad Hopkins. Free agent Scott Sanderson was expected to leave. The Titans could use a late-round pick on a tackle with some upside, such as Villanova's Stan Bennett or Bethune-Cookman's Damion Cook.

DE: The Titans need to re-sign unrestricted free agent Kenny Holmes, but that won't be easy. He had a career season opposite Jevon Kearse, so Holmes' asking price will be steep. The team cannot afford to head into 2001 without re-signing Holmes or bringing in an equal to replace him. Either way, the team should consider drafting a young player for reserve purposes along with Henry Ford. That's because Byron Frisch did not pan out as a rookie, and second-year player Keith Embray has very little upside. Illinois' Fred Wakefield or Kansas State's Monty Beisel would make sense in the late rounds.

RB: Based on Eddie George's durability, this is not a huge need. But with his hit total adding up and with George facing a lengthy rehab after offseason toe surgery, it would not be a bad idea if the team looked to bring in a back to lighten George's load. Rodney Thomas has been a decent backup, but he would not be a long-term answer if George went down. The team has not spent a relatively high pick on this position since it took George in 1996, and it's about time it does.

K: Al Del Greco's meltdown in the second half of the season and in the playoffs needs to be addressed. Even if the Titans don't cut the veteran, they should at least bring in a late-round pick or a free agent to push him. A couple of good kickers to keep an eye on are South Florida's Bill Gramatica and Arkansas State's Nick Gatto.

THE OUTLOOK

The Titans will be fortunate if they can keep even one of their three unrestricted free agents-Holmes, Mason or Walker-so there will be some holes to fill either via free agency or the draft, where the team has one pick in each round.

The biggest question is at receiver, a position the Titans didn't expect to have to address after acquiring Pickens last year. Pickens and every receiver other than Mason and Sanders offered little or no help, so the team might elect to use one of its first two picks to get younger there.

They also need to draft a guard for the future. Matthews still is playing at a high level, but it is time to groom a replacement. The offensive line also could use some quality depth at tackle, but the Titans can wait until the fifth or sixth round to find projecttype players to develop for reserve roles.

On defense, the end position should be dealt with in free agency, so the top concern in the draft will be cornerback. Even if both Rolle and Walker return, the team relies so heavily on its corners that it still needs to add another quality player to groom as a nickel starter. Don't be surprised if Tennessee uses its second- or third-round choice on a corner. -The War Room

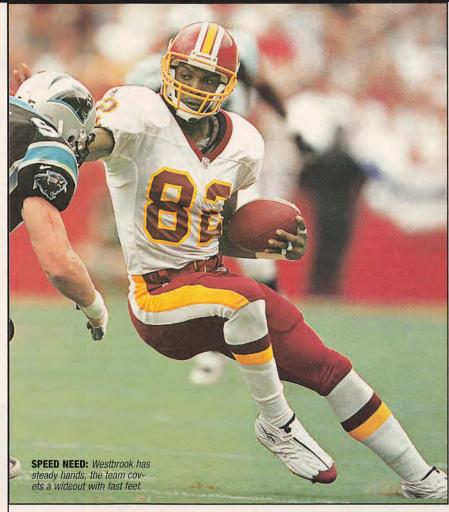
TEAM NEEDS

WR: The lack of depth at receiver became painfully obvious when Michael Westbrook went down for the season with a knee injury in Week 2. Sure, Washington had experienced veterans in Irving Fryar and Andre Reed. But neither was able to step up. Fryar will not be back, and Reed might not be, either. Albert Connell was a model of inconsistency and will not return. The Redskins need a burner to go along with Westbrook, a surehanded talent. A vertical threat would open up the offense and allow quarterback Jeff George to show off his arm. It also would give Stephen Davis a chance to recapture the stride that allowed him to win the NFL rushing title in 1999. A guy the Redskins should think about grabbing is Kansas State's Quincy Morgan. He runs a sub-4.5 40-yard dash and has the game-breaking tools to make this offense much better.

G: Injuries at this position revealed its lack of depth last year. Left guard Keith Sims played through chronic pain in his Achilles' tendon for several games before going on injured reserve. He did not recover in the offseason and was released, as were Tre' Johnson and tackle Andy Heck. Johnson, a starter at the beginning of the season, hurt his knee early in the year and was a salarycap casualty. Michael Moore, a fourthrounder last year, saw limited action last season but appeared raw when he did. The Redskins don't necessarily need to add starters because they have Moore and veteran Jay Leeuwenburg coming back, but they do need to add depth. Look for coach Marty Schottenheimer to go after a player such as Tulane's Bernard Robertson. He can move, and he has good instincts and toughness. K: The Redskins' problems on special teams

plagued them all last season, especially at kicker. Five kickers came through the nation's capital last season, and none was able to make the big kick. Poor accuracy and distance on field-goat attempts cost Washington several games and ultimately a playoff spot. This should be one of the first orders of business on the offseason priority list. If the Redskins fail to land a kicker in free agency, they will draft a kicker-but not early. Somebody Washington could get later in the draft is Kansas State's Jamie Rheem. DT: Dan Wilkinson and Dana Stubblefield

appeared to be really jelling at midseason last year. But the play of both overpaid veterans tailed off in the second half. Kenard Lang, who has been too inconsistent, could be cut in the offseason because of the salary cap. If that happens, it would give the Redskins a bit of a problem in the interior. Washington has speed on the outside in veteran ends Marco Coleman and Bruce Smith, but it needs something more at this position.



Great teams have deep defensive lines-look at the Giants last year. If the Redskins can get someone such as Southern California's Ennis Davis, they might be able to further establish their defense as one of the best. ILB: The Redskins are in the market for a new middle linebacker after releasing Derek M. Smith in the offseason. Also, there's not much depth. And with two aging veterans at tackle, Schottenheimer needs strength at middle linebacker. A throwback type such as Colorado State's Rick Crowell would

QB: Washington was expected to lose unrestricted free agent Brad Johnson, which would leave it with 33-year-old Jeff George and unproven youngster Todd Husak. If something were to go wrong with George next season, Washington would be in trouble. Look for the Redskins to add a developmental-type player. Western Carolina's David Rivers has some impressive tools and could

emerge from the group of mediocre quarter-

complement the speed and flash of outside

linebackers Shawn Barber and LaVar

OFFENSE Jeff George Todd Husak Kenard Lang FB ■ Larry Centers Dan Wilkinson Mike Sellers Kenard Lang Dana Stubblefield Stephen Davis Skip Hicks Nolan Harrison* WR ■ Michael Westbrook Bruce Smith **Derrious Thompson** Ndukwe Kalu* WR James Thrash* LOLB LaVar Arrington **Derrious Thompson** Greg Jones* Kevin Mitchell* Stephen Alexander Zeron Flemister None LT Chris Samuels ROLB Shawn Barber None Eddie Mason Michael Moore LG LC Champ Bailey Tyronne Drakeford* None Cory Raymer Sam Shade Mark Fischer Josh Symonette RG Jay Leeuwenburg Mark Carrier Michael Moore David Terrell Jon Jansen **Deion Sanders** Ed Ellis* Darrell Green Eddie Murray* ■ Tom Barnhardt*

Can play for any team Solid player

Fringe player *Unrestricted free agent

THE OUTLOOK

Schottenheimer likes to get heavily involved with personnel decisions, but he does a terrific job of utilizing everyone's input. Still, when it comes time to make a call on a player, Schottenheimer likes to have the final word. Look for him to use his clout to address the team's need at wide receiver early in the draft. Although Schottenheimer is a defensive coach by nature, his team is in dire need of a wideout to complement Westbrook.

Defensive line might be next on the docket for the Redskins. Washington has some big-name guys up front, but age is becoming an issue. Another need the team can't afford to ignore anymore is kicker. But Washington won't pursue a kicker early, like Oakland did last year. Schottenheimer will look to address this weakness late in the draft, if a free agent isn't signed first. Guard became a higher priority after the team released two starters in February.

The Redskins are no better than average at middle linebacker, but that should change after the draft. The core of Washington's defense was a problem last year mostly because of Derek Smith's inability to beat blockers to the hole. Smith clearly had lost a step, and that hurt the defense.

Late in the draft, Washington may try to get a quarterback, where the team lacks depth. *-The War Room*

RECENT HISTORY

2000 DRAFT

1a. LaVar Arrington, LB Showed flashes at end of year. Expected to start outside in '01

1b. Chris Samuels, OT
Produced right away on the left

side. Has a bright future.
3. Lloyd Harrison, DB

Contributed in nickel and dime packages and on special teams.

4. Michael Moore, G

Developed slowly as a rookie. Being counted on to add depth.

5. Quincy Sanders, DB

Rookie reserve will get chance to earn more playing time.



6. Todd Husak, QB No. 3 in 2000. Norv Turner's firing leaves his future in doubt 7a. Delbert Cowsette, DT

Cut before season. Spent time on Colts' practice squad.

7b. Ethan Howell, WR

Cut before season, then was re-signed after season.

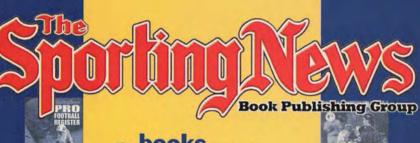
FIVE-YEAR TALLY

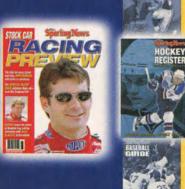
Until last April, the
Redskins had put together
a string of mediocre
drafts. Last year's group, led by
LB LaVar Arrington and OT Chris
Samuels, has an extremely bright
future. It has enough talent to
give the team, and new coach
Marty Schottenheimer, hope for a
playoff berth this season.

Year	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000
Total picks	6	8	7	6	8
Starters	1	2	3	2	2
Backups	0	2	2	1	5
Other team	0	3	0	0	0
Out of NFL	5	1	2	3	1

REDSKINS WAR ROOM

This team is in transition, both in the coaching staff and the front office. Coach Marty Schottenheimer is the new man in charge, and he appears to have solid control of all coaching and personnel decisions. This front office won't have a true identity until after the draft because Schottenheimer won't hire a replacement for dismissed personnel director Vinny Cerrato until then. Owner Daniel Snyder likely will not be as involved in personnel decisions as he was a year ago when Norv Turner was coach. Schottenheimer loves to get involved in personnel matters, and he is very thorough. He also has a tremendous ability to process information and make decisions. There is no better coach in accepting input from everybody in the organization. As a result, morale around Schottenheimer is usually high because everybody is involved in the selection process. Schottenheimer will lean on veteran scout Ron Nay, who is part of a group of veteran scouts that knows the roster very well, to get him through the draft. This will be a thorough and methodical group in its personnel decisions, but don't look for it to take many chances. Schottenheimer loves tough, hard-nosed overachievers and usually builds his team in his own image.





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Sporting News DRAF SURVEY



"Yo, it's Fly. The boss wants to know what you think about pro football and this Draft Guide. Fly's talkin' about the inside scoop on the future NFL men of the gridiron from "The Bible of Sports." Tell The Sporting News what you think and you get a shot at some great stuff."

ALL YOU have to do is answer the following questions and return this survey to the address on the next page by August 31, 2001, and you'll be entered in a drawing for one of five free, one-year subscriptions to The Sporting News OR one of 10 copies of the book "The Sporting News Selects Football's 100 Greatest Players."

"Get goin'. I'll see you in the sports pages."

- Which NFL front-office executive has done the best job of drafting in the last five years?
- Ozzie Newsome
- O Bill Polian
- A Ron Wolf
- 2. What is the best strategy for a team to use if it has the No. 1 overall pick in the draft—use the pick or trade down for more picks?
- ♦ Use it
- ♦ Trade down
- 3. What is the better way to build an NFL team today?
- ♦ Through the draft
- Signing free agents
- 4. When should college players be allowed to enter the draft?
- After four college seasons
- After three college seasons
- Whenever they like
- 5. When rating draft prospects, how important is it for NFL teams to research a player's off-field behavior?
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not at all important

- 6. What best describes your primary reason for following the draft?
- I'm a college fan, and I like to see what scouts think of players I've watched
- I'm an NFL fan, and I like to see what scouts think of rookie prospects
- 7. How much of the draft do you watch live on television?
- All of it, both days
- All of day one
- ♦ First round only
- Check the running ticker periodically
- None of it
- 8. How much of the draft do you listen to live on radio?
- All of it
- O Some of it
- None of it
- 9. How would you describe the level of your interest in the draft?
- I'd read stories about it every week of the year, if I could
- As soon as the NFL season ends, I'm ready to start absorbing draft information
- ♦ I start getting interested in April

- 10. Are you more interested in reading about draft prospects or the needs of individual NFL teams?
- Prospects
- ♦ NFL teams
- About the same interest
- 11. Where do you get most of your draft information?
- ♦ THE SPORTING NEWS (this Draft Guide, weekly magazine, website, etc.)
- Other magazines
- Newspapers
- ♦ Television
- ♦ Radio
- ♦ Internet
- 12. Do you buy any other draft publications? (Check all that apply.)
- ♦ Mel Kiper's
- Ourlads'
- ♦ The Drugstore List
- Other (list)
- 13. Do you plan to purchase TSN's Draft Guide again next year?
- ♦ Yes ♦ No
- 14. Overall, how would you rate this

Draft Guide?	: during the draft?	sporting event outside your local market?
♦ Excellent	♦ Yes ♦ No	♦ Yes ♦ No
♦ Very good		
♦ Good	19c. Did you refer to the Draft Guide after :	29. Do you wear merchandise featuring
♦ Average	the draft?	your teams' logos?
♦ Below average	♦ Yes ♦ No	♦ Yes ♦ No
15. If we could devote more or less space to	: 20. How many other people read	30. Would you be interested in purchasing a
certain sections (without changing the	your copy of TSN's Draft Guide?	
overall number of pages), how would	$\Diamond 0 \Diamond 1 \Diamond 2$	jersey or other merchandise related to
you like to see that space used?	♦ 3 ♦ 4-5 ♦ 6-10	your team's top draft pick?
More Fewer Perfect	♦ 11-15 ♦ More than 15	♦ Yes ♦ No
pages pages as is		
Feature	21. Besides the Draft Guide, have you read	31. Which credit card do you prefer using?
articles	another yearbook from THE SPORTING	♦ Visa
on players	News?	♦ MasterCard
Feature	♦ Yes ♦ No	
on other		♦ American Express
draft-related	22. If yes, which ones?	♦ Discover
topics	: (Check all that apply.)	♦ Other
Player	◇ Pro football	
bios	♦ College football	32. Please check the category
Team		that includes your age.
outlooks	◇ Fantasy football◇ Baseball	♦ Under 18 ♦ 18-24
Team		♦ 25-29 ♦ 30-34
histories	♦ Fantasy baseball	
	○ Pro basketball	♦ 35-44 ♦ 45-54
	○ College basketball	♦ 55-64 ♦ Over 64
16. What would you like to see in future	♦ Hockey	
editions that was missing this year?		33. Are you
		♦ Male? ♦ Female?
	23. If it were possible to order all or some	
	of The Sporting News' yearbooks as a	34. Are you
17. What factors influenced you to buy	package and have them delivered to you	
TSN's Draft Guide?	by mail, would you be interested?	♦ Married? ♦ Single?
(Check all that apply.)	♦ Yes ♦ No	
Overall editorial content		35. Did you attend or graduate
♦ Graphic presentation	: 24. Do you read THE SPORTING NEWS week-	from college?
♦ Cover	ly magazine?	♦ Yes ♦ No
♦ Price	♦ Yes ♦ No	
♦ Name recognition		36. Which of the following categories con-
	25. Have you ever seen or used THE	tains your approximate total household
18. Before the draft, how often did you refer	SPORTING NEWS' website	income, before taxes, for 2000? (Please
to TSN's Draft Guide?	(sportingnews.com)?	
♦ Every week	∴ ♦ Yes ♦ No	include total earnings for all members of
♦ Every day		your household from all sources.)
♦ Constantly	26. How many pro football games	♦ Under \$20,000
to the said the said the said to the said	do you attend in a season?	♦ \$20,000-\$29,999
19. Did you buy TSN's 2000 Draft Guide?	♦ 0 ♦ 1-3 ♦ 4-6	♦ \$30,000-\$39,999
♦ Yes ♦ No	♦ 7-10 ♦ More than 10	♦ \$40,000-\$49,999
10 16 1 1 11 11		♦ \$50,000-\$74,999
19a. If yes, how long did you keep it?	27. Is your favorite team in any of the four	
Until the draft was over	professional sports outside your local	◇ \$75,000-\$99,999 ◇ \$100,000 \$100,000
Until the season began	market?	♦ \$100,000-\$199,999
↑ Throughout the season	· ♦ Yes ♦ No	♦ Over \$200,000
♦ I'll always keep it	28. Have you ever traveled to attend a	
19b. Did you refer to the Draft Guide	20. Mare you ever naveled to attend a	
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	r records and will be kept CONFIDE	
from your sports p	poll answers. Please fill in the follow	ving information:

Name		
Address		
City		
State	Zip Code	

Please return the survey to:

The Sporting News
NFL Draft Survey P.O. Box 1040 Millburn, NJ 07041

GENERAL INFORMATION

The NFL draft is more than a bridge for football fans between the end of the Super Bowl and the beginning of training camp. It is an annual rite of passage, a life raft of hope thrown by the NFL to those teams that finished poorly the season before.

Begun in 1936 as a way to distribute college talent more evenly

and to keep salaries for incoming players low, the draft is now a hyped, made-for-TV extravaganza that generates as much discussion on talk radio and takes up as many column inches in newspapers as any single sports event. Last year, the draft was covered live, pick-by-pick, by more than a dozen radio stations around the United States.

Here are a few commonly asked questions about the NFL draft:

Where is it held? At the Theater at Madison Square Garden, between 31st and 33rd Streets in New York City.

When is it held? In mid-to-late April. This year, rounds 1 through 3 will be held on Saturday, April 21, with the first pick being made shortly after noon Eastern Time and the last pick being made at approximately 10 p.m. ET. Rounds 4 through 7 will be held on Sunday, April 22, beginning at 11 a.m. and ending at approximately 5 p.m. ET.

How much time do teams have to make their picks? In the first round, each team is allowed 15 minutes per selection. In the second round, each team has 10 minutes. Picks are made every five minutes in rounds 3 through 7.

How can tickets be purchased, and how much do they cost? Tickets are free and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. This year, tickets will be distributed at the Madison Square Garden box office beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 21. Any remaining tickets will be made available Sunday beginning at 9 a.m. One ticket will be distributed per person and can be used for admission on both days. All seating is general admission. Doors will open at 10:30 a.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. Sunday. The Theater at Madison Square Garden seats approximately 4,000 fans for the draft.

When and where will the draft be televised? ESPN will televise the draft Saturday from noon-7 p.m. ET. ESPN2 will televise the rest of the draft Saturday from 7 p.m. ET to its conclusion. ESPN will televise the draft Sunday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. ET, with ESPN2 carrying the remainder of the draft from 1 p.m. ET to its conclusion.

Where will the draft be covered online? The Sporting News, of course. Stop by TSN's Draft Central (sportingnews.com/nfl/draft) as we serve up news, notes, updated player projections, the latest Dish and in-depth analysis from our army of experts, including The War Room and senior writer Dan Pompei (see page 1). You also can link to The Sporting News Radio for constant audio updates and analysis.

2001 first-round order and 2000 records

- 1. San Diego (1-15)
- 2. Arizona (3-13)
- 3. Cleveland (3-13)
- 4. Cincinnati (4-12)
- 5. Atlanta (4-12)
- 6. New England (5-11)
- 7. Seattle (6-10) (from Dallas)
- 7. Seattle (0-10) (Holli Dallas)
- 8. Chicago (5-11)
- 9. San Francisco (6-10)
- 10. Seattle (6-10)
- 11. Carolina (7-9)
- 12. Kansas City (7-9)
- 13. Jacksonville (7-9)
- 14. Buffalo (8-8)
- 15. Washington (8-8)
- 16. Pittsburgh (9-7)
- 17. Green Bay (9-7)
- 18. Detroit (9-7)
- 19. N.Y. Jets (9-7)
- 20. St. Louis (10-6)
- 21. Tampa Bay (10-6)
- 22. Indianapolis (10-6)
- 23. New Orleans (10-6)
- 24. Denver (11-5)
- 25. Philadelphia (11-5)
- 26. Miami (11-5)
- 27. Minnesota (11-5)
- 28. Oakland (12-4)
- 29. Tennessee (13-3)
- 30. N.Y. Giants (12-4)
- 31. Baltimore (12-4)

One Year Ago

Here is how the 2000 first round unfolded, along with the games played and games started for each player:

Team	Player	Position	College G	ames played/started
1. Cleveland	Courtney Brown	DE	Penn State	16/16
2. Washington	LaVar Arrington	LB	Penn State	16/11
3. Washington	Chris Samuels	OT	Alabama	16/16
4. Cincinnati	Peter Warrick	WR	Florida State	16/16
5. Baltimore	Jamal Lewis	RB	Tennessee	16/13
6. Philadelphia	Corey Simon	DT	Florida State	16/16
7. Arizona	Thomas Jones	RB	Virginia	14/4
8. Pittsburgh	Plaxico Burress	WR	Michigan State	12/8
9. Chicago	Brian Urlacher	LB	New Mexico	16/14
10. Baltimore	Travis Taylor	WR	Florida	9/8
11. N.Y. Giants	Ron Dayne	RB	Wisconsin	16/4
12. N.Y. Jets	Shaun Ellis	DE	Tennessee	16/3
13. N.Y. Jets	John Abraham	LB	South Carolina	6/0
14. Green Bay	Bubba Franks	TE	Miami, Fla.	16/13
15. Denver	Deltha O'Neal	DB	California	16/0
16. San Francisco	Julian Peterson	LB	Michigan State	13/7
17. Oakland	Sebastian Janikowski	K	Florida State	14/0
18. N.Y. Jets	Chad Pennington	QB	Marshall	1/0
19. Seattle	Shaun Alexander	RB	Alabama	16/1
20. Detroit	Stockar McDougle	OT.	Oklahoma	8/8
21. Kansas City	Sylvester Morris	WR	Jackson State	15/14
22. Seattle	Chris McIntosh	OT	Wisconsin	14/10
23. Carolina	Rashard Anderson	DB	Jackson State	12/0
24. San Francisco	Ahmed Plummer	DB	Ohio State	16/14
25. Minnesota	Chris Hovan	DT	Boston College	16/13
26. Buffalo	Erik Flowers	DE	Arizona State	16/0
27. N.Y. Jets	Anthony Becht	TE	West Virginia	14/10
28. Indianapolis	Rob Morris	LB	Brigham Young	7/0
29. Jacksonville	R. Jay Soward	WR	Southern Californ	
30. Tennessee	Keith Bulluck	LB	Syracuse	16/1
31. St. Louis	Trung Canidate	RB	Arizona	3/0

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Cedric Washington, RB3	
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Chris Weinke OB 2	0
Chris Weinke, QB2	0
Eric Westmoreland, OLB6	0 7 6
Eric Westmoreland, OLB6 Clayton White, OLB6	0 7 6 7
Eric Westmoreland, OLB6 Clayton White, OLB6 Bruce Wiggins, C5	07674
Eric Westmoreland, OLB60 Clayton White, OLB60 Bruce Wiggins, C5 Eddie Williams, WR4	076742
Eric Westmoreland, OLB60 Clayton White, OLB60 Bruce Wiggins, C50 Eddie Williams, WR41 Jimmy Williams, CB7	0767421
Eric Westmoreland, OLB60 Clayton White, OLB	07674212
Eric Westmoreland, OLB66 Clayton White, OLB6 Bruce Wiggins, C5 Eddie Williams, WR4 Jimmy Williams, CB7 Louis Williams, G	076742127
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	0767421273
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	07674212732
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	076742127325
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	0767421273253
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	07674212732534
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	0767421273253449
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	0767421273253496
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	07674212732534967
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	076742127325349677
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	0767421273253496771
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	07674212732534967712
Eric Westmoreland, OLB	076742127325349677127

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